

WAR IN THE BALKANS



Kosovar women and children fleeing from Mitrovica to Albania. Nato fears that thousands of Kosovar men and boys, some only 12 years old, have been systematically rounded up and killed by the Serbs. Paul Lom/Magnum

Slaughter of the 62 sons of Bela Crkva

THIS is the story of how a village was destroyed. This is what that antiseptic phrase "ethnic cleansing" means when it is applied to real people, in this case a small village on Kosovo's western border.

A handful escaped to Kukes in Albania to tell their tale to Human Rights Watch and a French journalist. Their experience may have been repeated in thousands of villages of which we know nothing yet.

If there are any doubts that the liquidation of the Albanian population of Kosovo was not planned well in advance of Nato's air campaign, the story of Bela Crkva hauls that he; for the Serbs' response to the first bomb was immediate, co-ordinated and absolutely thorough, and showed no sign whatever of improvisation.

Bela Crkva - which means white church - was a small, wholly Albanian settlement of a few hundred souls on the banks of the Belaj river until the morning of 25 March, when its life was terminated.

At 3am, hours after Nato



dropped the first missile on Yugoslav territory, the army began shelling and burning villages on the Albanian border. Bela Crkva was one of many obscure hamlets that just happened to lie in the belt of border territory which the Serbs had earmarked for the first phase of ethnic cleansing to create a cordon sanitaire between Kosovo and Albania.

Still in darkness, the villagers fled to the river bank. Most of them hid under the railway bridge that crossed the Belaj. A smaller group gathered 50 yards away along the bank

to a sheep farm at the nearby village of Ovcara, gunned them down and buried the bodies in a pit.

There, the Serbs, under the command of General Ratko Mladic, divided the sexes after over-running the Muslim town in July 1995, sparing the women but executing all the men and burying them in mass graves. There, too, the category of "men" included boys of 12.

The practice goes back further than Srebrenica. In the eastern Croatian city of Vukovar, which the Yugoslav army captured in November 1991, the commander Colonel Veselin Slijivancanin, divided the sexes. The women were told to walk to the nearest town in Croatia. But the Serbs took the men, including more than 200 wounded patients in Vukovar hospital,

ANATOMY OF A MASSACRE

BY MARCUS TANNER

too. Now began the separation of the sexes of which so many Kosovo refugees have spoken, a practice the Serbs honed in the killing fields of Bosnia and applied with infamous attention to detail in the town of Srebrenica.

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including their wedding rings. The Serb soldiers told the women to get out, by walking along the railroad track to the nearest village at Zrje, a mile away.

But the men were not taken to Zrje and what we know of their fate beside the banks of the Belaj we know only from the accounts of the women who heard the sound of machine-guns opening fire, and from a few male survivors, who lay hidden in the river among the corpses of their neighbours and relatives. Two survivors were interviewed in Kukes, in northern Albania, by Human Rights Watch. Another was interviewed separately by a French journalist.

One of them said: "I was lucky. I was in front of the group. I was shot in the shoulder and flew into the stream, where I pretended to be dead. About 20 dead bodies fell on top of me. They then shot into the pile of bodies to be sure they were dead. They shot people one by one, but I didn't get shot because they didn't see me."

His companions gave a similar account.

Nathaniel Herzberg of Le Monde spoke to a third survivor.

He also told of how the men from the village were ordered to strip naked and hand over their valuables, and of how the Serbs then opened fire with machine-guns. And he also survived by falling into the stream and bobbing, apparently lifelessly, among the corpses for several minutes until the Serbs had left.

He thought about 40 had been killed but he probably under-estimated the death toll.

Human Rights Watch has compiled a list of 62 men from Bela Crkva who were killed on 25 March. The organisation said several women later went back from Zrje to the bank of the river to look for survivors. Two days after the massacre the women returned again to bury their men. They had to work two nights in a row to bury all the bodies.

The full report on the massacre at Bela Crkva can be found on www.hrw.org.

DOSSIER OF ATROCITIES

BRITAIN WILL today hand a dossier detailing more than 80 possible massacre sites in Kosovo to Judge Louise Arbour, head of the war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

Ms Arbour will be in London for a meeting with the Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to discuss how Serbs accused of ethnic cleansing and murder can be brought to trial.

The information has been collected by British officials, and some of it will not be made public to protect sources. It will include eyewitness accounts of killings of civilians by Yugoslav servicemen and paramilitaries. Ms Arbour will also be given a list of names of suspects.

The tribunal, based in the Hague, was set up in 1993 to deal with perpetrators of atrocities in Bosnia

KIM SENGUPTA

War aim is protectorate in Kosovo, says Blair

RECONSTRUCTION

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

ANY LAST prospect of a compromise end to the Balkan war vanished yesterday as Britain said Kosovo should be turned into a protectorate under the United Nations and other international bodies before moving to possible independence.

In separate but complementary statements, Tony Blair and the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, formally buried the Rambouillet package, which envisaged an autonomous Kosovo within Yugoslavia's present borders, and told President Slobodan Milosevic he had lost the province for good.

Addressing the annual meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in London, Mr Blair told Belgrade an international force would enter Kosovo "to secure the land for the people for whom it belongs". Not once did he mention partition, which has been mooted as a possible outcome, or even the most nominal sovereignty of Yugoslavia over the province as envisaged at Rambouillet; instead, he pledged "the dispossessed refugees of Kosovo will be brought back into possession of what is rightfully theirs". The Prime Minister's language is the clearest

de facto control of all Yugoslavia. Shortly before a phone conversation with President Bill Clinton in which he demanded an immediate end to the bombing, Mr Yeltsin said he could not abandon Mr Milosevic. "Bill Clinton hopes that... Milosevic will capitulate, give up the whole of Yugoslavia. We will not allow this; this is a strategic place," Itar-Tass quoted Mr Yeltsin as saying.

Officially the allies deny any intention of toppling Mr Milosevic directly (though they hope the Serbian people will do it for them) and rule out a land war. The air campaign would continue "and we are winning", George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, said.

That will remain the Nato line at least until after this weekend's summit in Washington, where any move in public to press a ground campaign could produce an embarrassing and open split among the 19 member-countries.

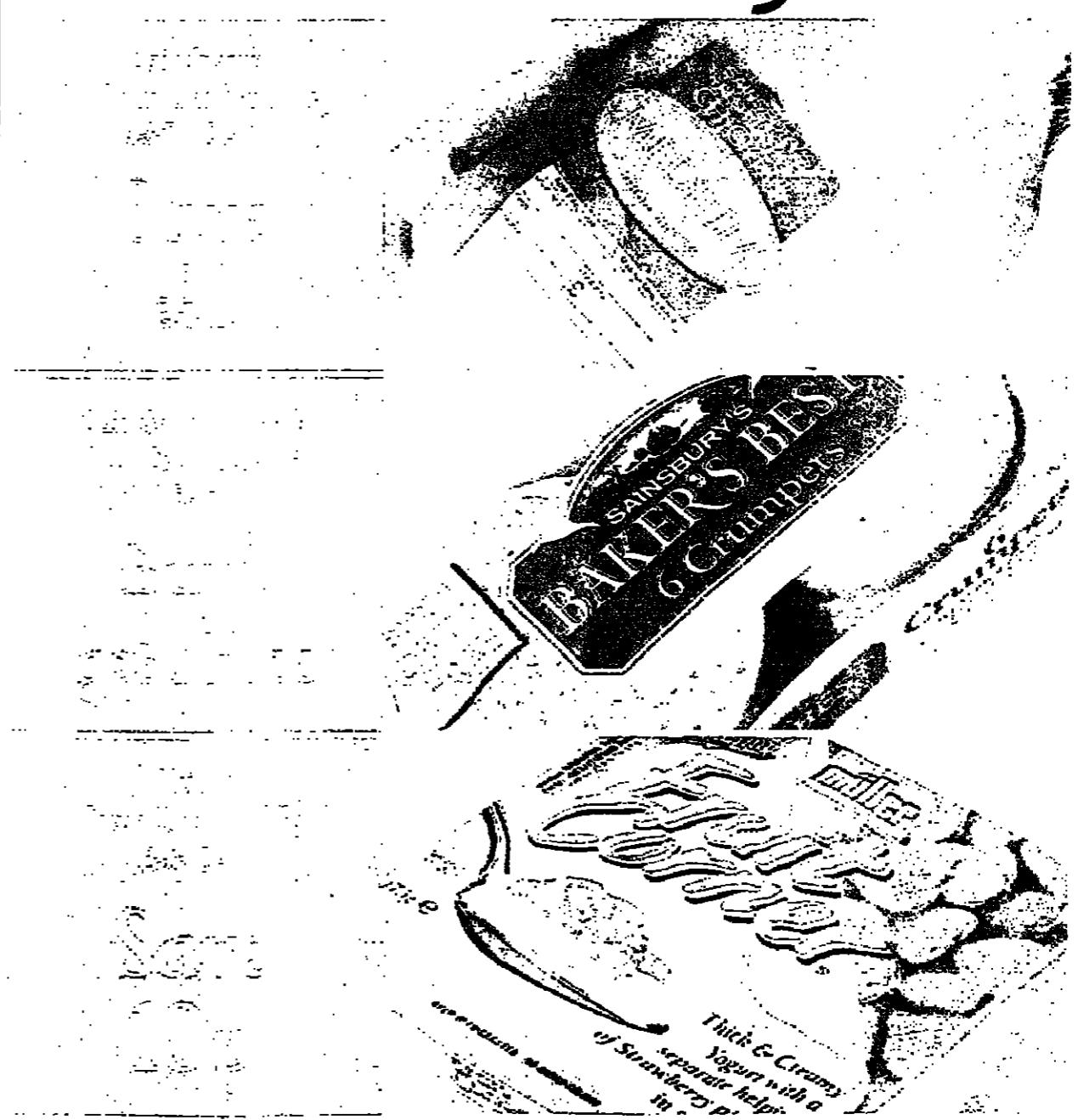
Increasingly, however, and even before the air war has produced a decisive breakthrough, the West is starting to turn to the two countries bearing the brunt of the refugee crisis.

the problem of rebuilding the Balkans once the conflict is over. In his speech to the EBRD - which was set up to help finance the transition of former Communist East Europe to market democracy - Mr Blair told his audience of bankers and politicians from the region that the reconstruction task would be massive. In Athens, the Greek Foreign Minister, George Papandreou, called for a "mini-Marshall Plan" to help Balkan economies recover.

Yesterday Croatia, Hungary and Bulgaria said the crisis, by hitting investment and tourism throughout the region, already would reduce economic growth by 1 per cent or more. Apart from the \$10bn (£6.25bn) or more bill in Kosovo itself, where entire towns and villages have been destroyed and industry and agriculture are in ruins, Nato leaders accept that post-Milosevic Yugoslavia will need billions of dollars to rebuild bombed industry and infrastructure.

Next week EU foreign ministers meet their counterparts from Albania and Macedonia to study a boost in immediate and medium-term aid to the two countries bearing the brunt of the refugee crisis.

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KOSOVO APPEAL

MONEY CONTINUES to pour into The Independent appeal to help the refugees of Kosovo. The total has reached an amazing £583,000.

"We had another good mail delivery on Monday morning and we're delighted that the money is still coming in," said a spokesman for the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), the body co-ordinating the appeal. "Independent readers' generosity is astounding."

The money will buy food,

blankets, first-aid, emergency shelters, sanitation and water purification equipment.

More than 600,000 Kosovar Albanians have fled or been forced from their homes by the Serbs. Nearly 140,000 are in massive camps at the Macedonian capital, Skopje, and 350,000 are in Albania.

Over the weekend, 40,000 more flooded in and thousands are living rough in the cold, wet hills in Kosovo. An estimated 15,000 refugees have been airlifted to countries in the West.

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Military want Serb oil line blockade

NATO STRATEGY

By KIM SENGUPTA

NATO COMMANDERS have asked for a naval blockade of Montenegro to stop shipments of oil for the Serbian regime.

The Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said yesterday that a blockade of the Adriatic coastal republic must be considered if the Alliance is to starve President Slobodan Milosevic's war machine of its fuel supply.

His views echo those of the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, and have growing support among Alliance strategists.

Nato said the month-long air campaign had destroyed 70 per cent of the Serbian oil reserves.

Military planners are urging allied governments to authorise the blockade of Montenegro, Serbia's fellow Yugoslav republic, to prevent him replenishing his stock.

Several allied governments are believed to be extremely worried about such an escalation and point out it may need a specific UN mandate.

Mr Cook said: "If we are really to deprive Milosevic of fuel, it cannot be right to let oil in through the ports."

In Washington, Ms Albright said: "We are taking all kinds of steps to limit the ability of oil companies to deliver oil ...

There is a way to visit and search ships and we are looking at a variety of ways to tighten the screws on Milosevic economically."

Nato spokesman Jamie Shea said: "We are looking at what the options are to ... screw the tap down still further ... but we have to be consistent with international law."

Montenegro's government is pro-Western, opposes Serbia's ethnic cleansing and has already taken in almost 60,000 Albanian refugees from Kosovo.

But the government in Podgorica is under pressure from a vociferous pro-Belgrade faction and is said to be the target of a destabilisation campaign by Milosevic. Hardship caused to the civilian population there by allied action could strengthen the Milosevic faction.

Alliance strategists also feel their plans are being seriously undermined by lack of low-level attacks, say senior defence sources and that hampers efforts to combat Serbian ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, one of the main aims of the strikes.

Although Nato has total air superiority at high altitude, the lower levels are fraught with peril.

Milosevic has largely saved his integrated air defence system from action and that could



US Army Airborne paratroopers arriving at Tirana yesterday as part of the build-up in Albania

TIMETABLE: DAYS 26, 27

Sunday 18 April
11pm: Tanjug says Nato pilots bombed the area around Pristina four times
11.55pm: Air raid alert sounds in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš and Cacak

Monday 19 April
12.25am: Explosion heard in Novi Sad
12.30am: Parachute, 90 miles south of Belgrade, hit by three missiles

12.35am: Nato planes attack the majority Hungarian region of Subotica, in northern Yugoslavia

1.00am: Morini, the main crossing point for fleeing ethnic Albanian refugees into Albania closed after Belgrade's ending of diplomatic relations with Albania

8.55am: Nato missiles strike a communications transmitter near Pristina
9.00am: Blast heard near Boljevac in eastern Serbia

10.00 am: Tass reports that Boris Yeltsin says he will not allow the West to defeat Slobodan Milosevic

10.55am: Albanian's ambassador to Nato accuses Serbia of shelling his country daily and says Albania is ready for wider attacks

11.00am: Air raid reported on the Golea area of Kosovo

1.00pm: Serb soldiers and Albanian border guards exchange gunfire on the Yugoslav-Albanian frontier

5.30pm: Reports emerge that the Yugoslav army is expelling residents of three mainly Muslim villages in Montenegro, Bulej, Dacici and Kalundjerski Laz, near the border with Kosovo and turning the villages into a second frontline

THE BALKAN QUESTION

Why is Nato not arming the KLA?

ANY FORMAL decision to arm the KLA would have to be authorised by the US, which has specifically ruled that out.

Until it persuaded the KLA to sign the Rambouillet agreement, Washington regarded the KLA as little more than a terrorist grouping, too weak and undisciplined to be an effective fighting force. Those suspicions persist. Washington also fears victory for the KLA would strengthen Kosovar claims for independence from Serbia, a change of border that the US fears would lead to a free-for-all in the Balkans. The precedents are also not

KEY ISSUES BEHIND THE WAR EXPLAINED

encouraging. Arming Nicaraguan guerrillas without congressional approval got Reagan into the biggest trouble of his presidency; the arms supplied to the Afghan mujahidin following the Soviet invasion have subsequently been used by the Taliban and may have assisted anti-US terrorists. Official denials, however, do not mean the KLA will get no US-funded weapons: Washington repeatedly denied it had helped arm the Bosnian Muslims but was forced eventually to admit that it had.

MARY DEJEVSKY

A CAPITULATION by the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, is not essential to end Nato's war in the Balkans, according to French sources. Once the Serb military machine has been crushed, and is no longer capable of resistance, the West could achieve all its aims through a diplomatic solution brokered at the United Nations, which Belgrade would have to tolerate.

An international force, possibly under the flag of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, would then take possession of Kosovo and escort the refugees back to their homes.

Paris believes the alliance is

vulnerable flying at low altitude. Military strategists say allied aircraft are having to carry out the attacks from a much higher level than they may

wish, which is one reason for "accidents" such as the bombing of a passenger train near Leskovac in southern Serbia and Nato's bombing of a refugee column near Djakovica.

Yesterday, 400 Muslim villagers fled over the border to Montenegro from Serbia saying

Serb soldiers ordered them to leave their homes. Military observers say this is part of the Serb process to establish a new front line.

AP

Kosovo invasion ruled out by French

THE LAND WAR DEBATE

BY JOHN LICHFIELD IN Paris

Despite the deepening humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo, and increasing impatience in Western public opinion, French sources say Nato governments have no intention of mounting a land invasion. In Nato circles the view is that international forces would not enter Kosovo until a "semi-permissive environment" had been achieved: in other words when the Serbs recognise that they are powerless to resist, even though they do not formally surrender.

Paris believes the alliance is

weeks away from achieving the necessary degree of destruction of Serb infrastructure and military capability. But it would take even longer to assemble a ground force capable of invading Kosovo.

Such an invasion would cause even greater suffering to the Kosovars, French officials say, and would risk causing a wider conflict in the region. More and more voices in France – as elsewhere – have been questioning this obsession with a limited war, in

tent in calling for Russia to be kept in play; but all the allies accept that it is essential to avoid a Russian veto in the UN.

It is widely accepted, the French say, that the best solution would be a UN security council resolution, encapsulating the Rambouillet peace accord on Kosovo, which would be imposed *de facto* on Belgrade.

The French reject any suggestion that they are ready to break ranks to seek a diplomatic compromise. They say that France – which now has 60 planes operational in the Balkans, 20 more than Britain – is committed to continuing the air war for as long as necessary.

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District Assistant Commissioner Alan Fry with an example of one of the nails used in the Brixton bomb

Andrew Buurman

Police quiz extremists after 'Combat 18' nailbomb claim

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE
AND IAN BURRELL

TENSION OVER the Brixton nail bomb was heightened yesterday after an anonymous caller purporting to be a member of the far-right group Combat 18 claimed responsibility for the attack.

Police said they were treating the call - made from a phone box in Well Hall Road, Eltham, south-east London just yards from where Stephen Lawrence was murdered - with extreme caution. It is believed, however, that officers yesterday questioned a number of people suspected of membership of the group. Extra uniformed officers have also been drafted in to Brixton.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Alan Fry, head of the Metropolitan Police's anti-terrorist unit, said the man had dialled 999 at 6.06am yesterday morning and told the operator: "This is Combat 18. We claim responsibility for yesterday's [sic] bomb."

He said that although the caller had wrongly implied that the bomb had exploded on Sunday rather than Saturday, his officers were investigating the call. "We can only reiterate that no motive has been ruled out. We are keeping an open mind," he said.

He added: "We cannot rule

out that this was a hoax call. We are treating it with extreme caution."

Fifteen people remain in hospital as a result of injuries caused by the explosion in Brixton, south London, at 5.26pm on Saturday. Two men are in danger of losing their sight.

Police said yesterday that the bomb contained between 6-10lbs (4.5kg) of metal nails of various sizes, the largest up to 7ins (18cm) long. Officers have recovered the dark Head brand sports bag containing the bomb, which was taken by a passerby just moments before the bomb exploded outside an Iceland supermarket.

Police said they were also studying a number of other leads and have been scrutinising hours of CCTV footage taken from three fixed cameras near the bus stop in Electric Avenue. However it is understood their investigation has been hampered because shortly before 5pm on Saturday - the time at which the bag was first spotted at the stop before a group of youths, unaware of its contents, moved it to the supermarket - the view was at least partially obscured by a broken-down bus.

Police are also reviewing CCTV footage from Well Hall Road. A camera has been installed in the road to protect a memorial to Mr Lawrence, the black teenager murdered by racists in 1993.

"But they have not carried out this kind of bombing before which makes me feel it is unlikely to be them, unless they are trying something new."

Either way, if the aim of the caller was to heighten tension among the black community in Brixton, he may well be successful. Lee Jasper, secretary of the National Black Alliance, said he believed that the bombing may well be the work of racists. A public meeting has been called in Brixton by the National Black Alliance and the National Assembly Against Racism to discuss the attack and how to keep alive the recommendations made in the Macpherson report.

At the depot, which is on a small industrial estate near the M25, refused to comment.

The arrests come at a time when the Lawrence suspects have been engaged in what some regard as a publicity strategy designed to overturn the widely held belief - even though the case against them collapsed - that they were responsible for Stephen's murder.

Stephen's parents, Neville and Doreen Lawrence, were outraged when the five men took part in a television programme earlier this month in which they claimed to have had nothing to do with the killing.

Norris and Acourt, together



In custody at Gravesend, Kent: David Norris (top) and Jamie Acourt

with Jamie's brother Neil, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson, had all refused to give evidence to the public inquiry into Stephen's death but were each named as suspects in the inquiry report produced by the retired judge Sir William Macpherson.

Last week, Dobson participated in a live radio phone-in programme, in which he professed his wish to write a book about his experience of the Stephen Lawrence saga.

Yesterday, the families of the two arrested Lawrence suspects refused to comment on the development.

Jamie Acourt's mother Patricia, speaking from the family home in Greenwich, south-east London, said: "I have no comment." A woman, thought to be David Norris' mother Teresa, appeared behind security gates at their family home in Chislehurst, Kent, but also refused to comment.

Batteries among UK products hit by new trade war tariffs

BY LEA PATTERSON

BRITISH MANUFACTURERS of batteries and bath products will be hit by punitive tariffs in the long-running banana trade war between the United States and Europe, it was confirmed yesterday.

Makers of French handbags and German tea and coffee-makers will also suffer. Following the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) decision to approve US trade sanctions worth \$191.4m (£119.6m).

In Brussels, EU officials said there were no plans to challenge the WTO ruling, although they strongly disputed the US assertion that sanctions could be backdated to the beginning

of March. The US is maintaining that the tariffs should apply from 3 March, the date it decided to impose sanctions on European companies as compensation for losses suffered by US companies as a result of the EU banana trading regime.

The EU, however, believes that sanctions can only apply from the beginning of this week, the date of WTO ratification of US proposals. The EU is now expected to seek both clarification on the ruling from the WTO as well as talks with officials from the US.

"It is normal that a decision

only applies from the day it was taken," said Roderick Abbott, EU trade ambassador.

Although many British industries - including exporters of cashmere sweaters and biscuits - have been spared sanctions after the WTO decided that the US's original proposals were excessive, yesterday's ruling still targets a host of smaller exporters throughout the UK.

Companies affected in Britain include makers of bath preparations, whose exports to the US are worth more than £2m a year, and manufacturers of batteries and lithographs. UK companies export almost £15m worth of batteries to the US every year, while annual exports of lithographs total £2m.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Trade and Industry said: "We have made the US very aware of the harm they have been causing to the sectors targeted."

The sanctions - imposed after the US successfully argued that EU banana import rules favoured former European colonies over Latin American producers and US marketing companies - could last until next year. According to European Commission sources, the EU will need "several months" to amend its current banana import regime.

IN BRIEF

Doctor accused in baby death

A DOCTOR tried to cover up a colleague's error that led to a new baby's death from a massive morphine overdose, the GMC heard yesterday. Dr Jean Shorland, a consultant paediatrician at Rotherham General, South Yorkshire, is charged with serious professional misconduct.

New hope for Bentley relatives

A HIGH Court ruling yesterday raised hopes of compensation for the family of Derek Bentley, who was wrongly convicted and executed for the murder of a police officer in 1952. Ruling on four separate test appeals, judges held that "gross judicial misconduct" - as in the Bentley case - may warrant the paying of compensation.

Prisoner 'helped cellmates hang' A PRISONER who is alleged to have got a sadistic pleasure from seeing his cellmates hang appeared yesterday at the Old Bailey charged with murder. Glenn Wright, 27, from Northampton, allegedly had a hand in three prisoners hanging themselves. One later died.

Scots top league for snoring

SCOTS ARE Britain's biggest snorers, it appears. Of 3,000 customers who every month bought nasal strips used to prevent snoring, 20% were from Scotland, a study found. In contrast, residents of East Anglia seem to enjoy silent nights - no one there ordered the NoSnor strips.

Nelson's nephew called to arms THE FAMILY history of legendary naval leader Lord Horatio Nelson has a new chapter - his great-great-great-great-great-nephew has qualified as a Royal Marine. Craig Nelson, 24, from Dorset has qualified as a part of the Royal Marines' 747 squad based in Devon.

A Bafta beckons for Parkinson

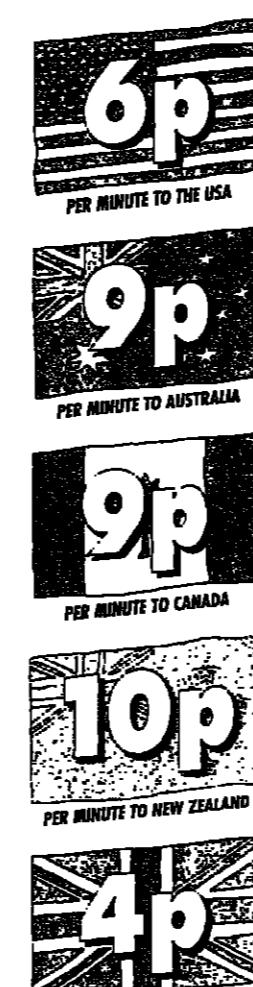
BY DAVID LISTER
Art News Editor

THERE'S NO chat-show host like an old chat-show host. Michael Parkinson, brought back to the BBC after two decades, has been nominated for a Bafta television award for his show. He might have to present it himself, as he is hosting the ceremony next month.

He will vie with Billy Connolly, Kathy Burke and John Bird and John Fortune for best light-entertainment performance. Parkinson has been nominated for a Bafta award once before, for the controversial spoof participation programme *Ghost Watch*. "I think I got the nomination for best actor, and I was playing myself," he said.

Others in the running for awards to be made on 9 May, are Thora Hird, Francesca Annis, Natasha Little and Joanna Lumley for best actress.

Best-actor contenders are Robert Carlyle, Tom Courtenay, Albert Finney and Timothy Spall. The soap category, included for the first time, will be fought out between *Brookside*, *EastEnders*, *Coronation Street*, *EastEnders* and *Hollyoaks*.



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'Failure of system' led to PC's death

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

THE FATHER of a policewoman who was stabbed to death by a paranoid schizophrenic called yesterday for the creation of a national database of dangerous mentally ill people, as a damning report into his daughter's death criticised police, health and social services.

Sidney Mackay made a scathing attack on the lack of communication between police and social services which led to his daughter Nina being fatally wounded as she tried to arrest Elizouli in October 1997.

Mr Mackay, himself a former police chief superintendent, said that his daughter's death would become "another statistic" unless the system for dealing with dangerous mentally ill people was radically over-



Mackay: 'Too high a price'

of the door and plunged a 7in (17cm) kitchen knife into her chest up to the hilt.

The report was produced by a team led by Ken Dixon, the former director of social services director in Camden. Speaking at its publication, Mr Mackay pointed out that 43 similar reports had been published since the introduction of community care in 1992. "There should be a central database of these individuals throughout the country," he said.

Westminster Social Services was also criticised for placing him in bed and breakfast hotels outside the borough, leading to a further deterioration in his condition. Yesterday Bill Roots, the chief executive of Westminster city council, said that "around 100" mentally ill people were still housed by the authority in bed and breakfasts outside the borough.

Elizouli, who is now held in a top-security special hospital, was praised by the Dixon team for the help he gave to the inquiry. He said he was "deeply sorry" for what had happened.

hauled. He said: "The system wants to be re-organised root and branch. Community Care as we know it is window-dressing. It doesn't exist."

PC Mackay, 25, died after she smashed through the front door of a flat in east London with a hydraulic ram. Elizouli was waiting on the other side



Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness (left) and Gerry Adams arriving at Downing Street yesterday EPA/Gerry Penny

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SDLP anger at Trimble and Adams

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

the marching season and the European elections.

Seamus Mallon, giving vent to the frustration over months of delay, spoke after more than five hours of talks at Downing Street between Tony Blair, Bertie Ahern and the Ulster party leaders.

Crisis talks are to be reconvened early next week, but yesterday there was no sign of compromise by either Sinn Fein or the Ulster Unionists over the refusal by Mr Trimble, the first minister in the new Assembly, to appoint an executive containing Mr Adams until the IRA starts decommissioning its arms.

Downing Street appeared to concede for the first time last night that the Hillsborough Declaration - agreed by Mr Blair and Mr Ahern - was now a dead letter. "Whether or not the Hillsborough Declaration is dead or alive is irrelevant, because the two issues at Hillsborough remain sequencing and choreography," said a Number 10 spokesman.

Mr Adams emerged from his session of talks with the two prime ministers still warning that the Good Friday Agreement was in "free fall", as he had done 24 hours earlier.

Mr Trimble and Mr Adams appeared to agree on only one thing - that they do not want to see the peace process "parked" until the autumn. The British and Irish governments are also against allowing a delay for six months but, as *The Independent* reported yesterday, if may become necessary, if no breakthrough is reached next week, to avoid the talks running into

the marching season and the European elections.

Mr Mallon and John Hume, the leaders of the SDLP, welcomed the readiness of the two governments to keep the momentum of the talks going to find a way through the difficulties without calling a halt. Mr Mallon accused Mr Trimble and Mr Adams of trying to hold the peace process to ransom for their "absolutist" positions.

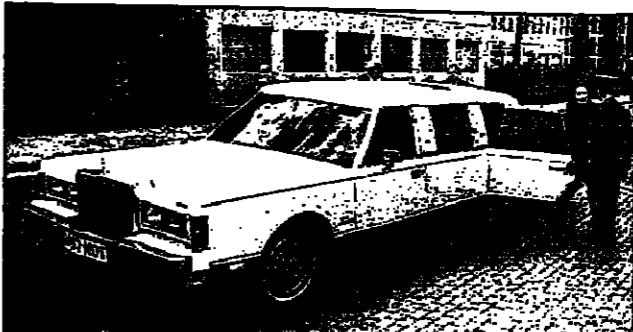
"Neither of them own this agreement. This agreement belongs to the island of Ireland, north and south. It was agreed by all the parties and the two governments.

"The people of Ireland have no intention of allowing this agreement to go by default, nor do we have any intention of allowing it to be destroyed by decommissioning. This agreement has been held to ransom by two absolute demands. There is no stomach left to destroy it. We are not going to allow it to crash."

Andrew Mackay, the Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland, urged the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach to proceed without Sinn Fein, but that course of action - although supported yesterday in the *Irish Times* - was rejected by the SDLP. Mr Hume said it was an "inclusive" agreement, and to exclude Sinn Fein would be a "great mistake".

Mr Ahern said he did not believe the agreement had reached "free fall" but the two governments had not been able to find a way around the problem. The Irish Government was also against "parking" the agreement. All the parties wanted the dispute concluded in the next few weeks, he said.

'Green' minister used stretch limo



Alan Meale (centre) and the Ford Lincoln limousine

A LABOUR environment minister has driven into trouble by arriving at a transport conference in a stretch limo to make a speech about the damage caused by "the way we travel".

Alan Meale was taken two miles from Peterborough train station on Friday in a Ford Lincoln, which does 17 miles to the gallon in the city.

Then he told a meeting of representatives of the Greater Peterborough Commerce, Training and Enterprise Council: "The way we travel is damaging our towns, harming our countryside and already chang-

ing the climate of the planet." A Friends of the Earth spokesman said: "I think his choice of car is sending out the wrong message."

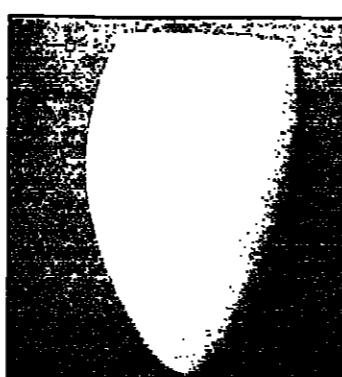
"It is a bit inconsistent with the Government's policies on transport."

But a spokesman for the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions defended Mr Meale's transport choices, saying: "The minister was able to make the majority of his journey by train."





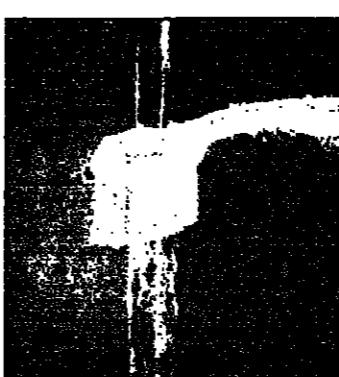
Bluebird Electric
A high-speed electric car driven by Don Wales, grandson of the former land speed record-holder Sir Malcolm Campbell. Aims to break the world speed record for electric cars.



The Waterless Urinal System
Designed to be more environmentally sound, the urinal is coated with silicone gel to repel urine, which drains into a cartridge that is renewed every 8,000 uses. The maker, Waterless UK, claims it saves £200 a year in water costs.



Divine Chocolate
To chocoholics all chocolate is divine, but this product, made by London-based Day Chocolate Company, also soothes your conscience. It shares its profits with African cocoa farmers.



Ozone
A toothbrush for the next millennium comes in a new design with a central aperture to flush debris away. Its manufacturer, London-based Ozonex, claims that this feature makes it more hygienic.



Viagra
Developed through work done to help sufferers of angina, Viagra has been responsible for a slew of terrible jokes, as well as helping the impotent. It was developed at laboratories at Sandwich in Kent.

Teletubbies in century's hall of fame

THE UPLIFTING, the unlikely and the unusual were yesterday highlighted as the greatest innovations of our age when the latest list of Millennium products was announced.

The anti-impotence drug Viagra and the inexplicably popular children's characters the Teletubbies took their place along a landmine clearing machine and a new toothbrush.

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

Announcing the latest list of 201 products - selected by the Design Council - the Trade and Industry Secretary, Stephen Byers, said: "Some of the products announced today have earned millions of pounds for UK companies. Others provide solutions to world problems like landmines. It is a

truly varied list which reflects the talent and innovation in Britain."

The products, which join a list now totalling 634, were selected by a panel of judges, using six criteria. The judges were looking for products that opened new opportunities, challenged existing conventions, were environmentally responsible, applied new or

existing products, solved problems, and had clear user benefits. There was no explanation of which of these criteria the Teletubbies had fulfilled.

The Design Council said the awards served to highlight some of the best British products available. "They have to be highly innovative to have a chance," said a spokesman. As well as prestige, the

awards are likely to have commercial benefits. As well as trumpeting them in advertising, companies will benefit from having their product showcased in the Millennium Dome, expected to be visited by hundreds of thousands - if not millions - of people. They will also be included in a travelling exhibition that will tour internationally.

The Ford Motor Company, whose Focus car was yesterday included on the list, said it is likely to use the award as part of its vehicle advertising.

A spokeswoman for the DTI added: "The inclusion of these products on the list is certainly going to let people know about them. It has already had that effect - a biodegradable credit card produced in Britain

and included on the list is now being produced in Canada as well. These products are going to be given a forum."

While the inclusion of some

products may raise a smile, the headline items are joining more obviously "scientific" innovations. For instance, the FireAnt, produced by the Defence Research Agency at Farnborough, burns out landmines without

exploding them. Likewise, the Tricorder, a three-dimensional modelling system, can dramatically improve the rebuilding of human features after surgery.

Another chosen product is the Amazon Aquacharger, made by a firm in Corby, Northamptonshire, which uses river currents to generate electricity and charge batteries.

Head recruits sniffer dog to tackle drugs

TWO BOYS of 15 have been suspended from school after their headmaster hired a sniffer dog trained to detect illegal drugs.

John Peckham, believes his Bramhall High School, in Stockport, Greater Manchester is the first in the country to mount random drug searches. Parents and governors welcomed the scheme, although civil rights campaigners opposed it.

Mr Peckham said: "Just as the fear of being breath-tested deters many adults from drinking and driving, so the very remote possibility of being caught in school with an illegal drug will also act as a deterrent for many young people."

"We see this as part of a comprehensive programme to reduce the harm that drugs do - and the best way to avoid harm is not to become involved. Most of our students choose that route."

Mr Peckham said that he employed the labrador named Scuba and handler Steve Warren to protect the majority of the 1,450 comprehensive pupils who had never touched drugs. He hoped the sniffer dog's presence would deter the small number of pupils who deal in cannabis on school grounds.

Mr Warren, who runs Sov-

BY CLARE GARNER

ereign Specialised Security in Macclesfield, checked the changing rooms, cloakrooms and public areas such as the school's perimeter fence.

The search, which cost £35, was part of a broader campaign against drugs at the school which included teachers smelling a massage oil made with cannabis to acquaint themselves with the smell.

Max Hunt, Stockport chief education officer, said using a sniffer dog might worry younger pupils.

A spokesman for the Greater Manchester branch of Liberty, the campaigning organisation for civil rights, said: "All the agencies agree that cannabis use and alcohol use should be treated with counselling and sympathy."

"If pupils feel they are not getting this support because of the way the searches are done, that is sending out the wrong kind of messages."

But Mr Peckham has faith in his initiative and has warned pupils that Scuba could be back at any time.

The suspended boys were suspected of possessing cannabis, the headmaster said.

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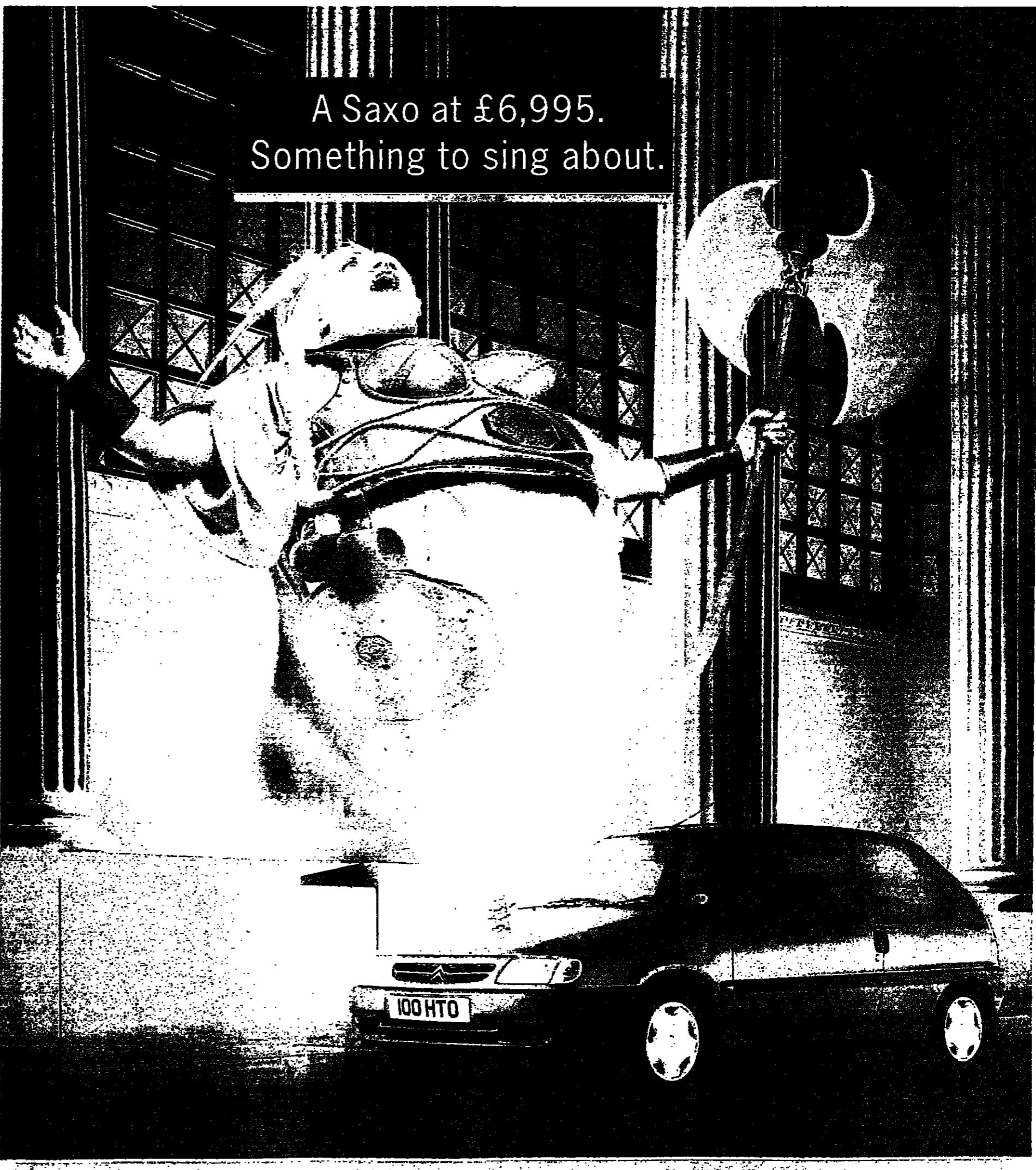
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shortage

Labour courts Scottish unions

LABOUR MINISTERS yesterday fought to head off a damaging split with public service trade unions at a crucial stage in the Scottish Parliament election campaign.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, courted union leaders over breakfast in Glasgow, and Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, tried to assure activists that workers' pay and conditions would be protected when hospital and school services transferred to the private sector.

"The thing that matters is the provision of the facilities and the jobs that they bring," Mr Dewar told the opening session of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) conference in Glasgow.

Ministers and union leaders appear to have avoided total humiliation when the conference debated the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) tomorrow, but union criticism of the Tory-inspired funding mechanism remains a running sore.

Coming in the middle of the election campaign, the four-day conference is a mixed blessing for Labour, offering both a platform and the potential for embarrassment.

Alex Salmond, the Scottish National Party leader, had to content himself with addressing a fringe meeting rather than the full assembly.

Mr Dewar's appearance at the rostrum, with his mollifying message on public services and jobs, was brought forward from Thursday, clearing the way for an expected address by Tony Blair.

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN
Scotland Correspondent

The nationalists were dealt a blow when delegates backed a motion condemning independence and "narrow nationalism" as contrary to the objectives of the trade union movement. Rejecting any economic case for independence, the motion from the Fire Brigades Union called on the STUC to "disassociate itself from any group which persists in pursuing isolationist and divisive policies which foster prejudice and racism".

The SNP expressed surprise that the motion might be referring to them and pointed out the party had campaigned alongside the STUC against racism.

Mr Brown told trade union and business leaders over breakfast that divorce from the rest of the UK would put 350,000 jobs at risk in Scotland - a claim dismissed by Mr Salmond as "kindergarten economics".

The SNP leader asked if Mr Brown was seriously arguing that trade between Scotland and England would stop after independence.

Ministers' main focus was on the row over the use of private finance and contractors to build and run new hospitals, schools and housing projects.

The present row centres on Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, where a £180m PFI development is under way. Opponents say it will cost taxpayers £90m over the next 30 years and Edinburgh people would still not own a single brick of it.

VOTING FOR A NEW BRITAIN



While Margaret Kean (left) leans towards Labour, Ronald McLeod backs the SNP, but Fiona Kearns remains undecided. Colin McPherson

'Paying more tax than England is silly'

VOTERS' PANEL: LINLITHGOW

Margaret Kean, 53, runs bakery

Leaning towards Labour. "I would not like a separate Scotland, because I'm Scottish first but British second. In our history we have fought too long to unite our country to break it up now. I have not been happy with SNP policies. The idea of paying more tax than in England is silly."

Ronald McLeod, 70, lollipop man

SNP. "Labour has never done anything for us."

Maybe the SNP can do something now. The politician who impressed me most until a couple of weeks ago was Alex Salmond. But I don't like his policy on troops in Kosovo."

Margaret Mary Stevenson, 30, accountant for US bank SNP. "I support independence within Europe, because countries of a similar size, like Denmark have benefited."

IF THE SNP is to have any chance of gaining control of the Scottish Parliament on 6 May, it must win Linlithgow. This birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots, and home of the SNP leader, Alex Salmond, is full of political symbolism and also provides a parliamentary seat for maverick Labour MP Tam Dalyell, long-time opponent of devolution.

The *Independent* interviewed a group of voters, chosen at random, and will return as the campaign progresses to see if the voters' views change.

A close race between Labour and the SNP is in prospect.

This is commuter land, half-way between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Unemployment is low. It appears safe Labour territory - Mr Dalyell collected 54 per cent of the votes in the 1997 general election. However, the local West Lothian council was until recently SNP-controlled and voters are well-versed in switching preferences.

Alex Salmond has most impressed me, except for his remarks over Kosovo. I'm happy to pay more tax if it improves local services."

Stephen Chambers, 22, chef

May not vote. "The least impressive leader has been Alex Salmond, whose comments on Kosovo were a wee bit out of order. I don't think it would be fair to have to pay more tax here than in England."

Fiona Kearns, 31, interior designer

Undecided. "I have never had any interest in politics before and I have no idea who I will vote for. I'm not sure on tax or independence, but I hope the parliament will be able to focus more on Scottish issues like health and welfare."

Edwin Morton, 59, runs small construction firm

Conservative. "I always vote Conservative, because they do most for small business. I support a Scottish Parliament and I voted for it. On tax, I would be quite

happy to pay an extra penny if we got what Alex Salmond promises. But I was very disappointed in what he said about Kosovo."

Julie Tierney, 18, trainee hairdresser

Probably Labour. "I don't want us to be linked to England anymore. We should be able to decide what we want. But I wouldn't vote SNP because one of the SNP people here is in the Orange Lodge. None of my Catholic friends could vote for them."

Sheena Woodhouse, 57, runs bookshop

Probably Liberal Democrat. "It's time that things were seen from a Scottish point of view. I don't support New Labour - if it were a bit more Old Labour, then perhaps. They seem to be Conservatives in disguise."

John Brownlie, 26, textile company supervisor

SNP, but may change. "I'm glad we have a parliament if it means bringing jobs to Scotland. Independence is all very well, but I'm worried about tax. Salmond shouldn't have said what he said about Kosovo."

Jennifer Morgan, 30, accountant

Conservative. "If I could see some way of voting tactically I would do it to stop the SNP because independence is bad for Scotland. Also my husband is English and the current mood of nationalism makes it more difficult for him to fit in."

JACK O'SULLIVAN

Plaid Cymru 'doping voters'

BY BARRIE CLEMENT

A HITHerto polite election campaign for the Welsh Assembly became distinctly more heated yesterday when Plaid Cymru was accused of dishonesty for claiming it never stood for independence.

In what appeared a united effort, Labour and the Liberal Democrats alleged that the Welsh nationalists were attempting to hide their policy which would lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom.

Dafydd Wigley, president of Plaid, was accused by Labour of trying to "dope" the voters and the Liberal Democrats branded him "wriggly Wigley".

Mr Wigley said the two rival parties were indulging in "McCarthyism" and said Labour was becoming desperate as the chances of the Welsh Secretary, Alun Michael, securing a seat ebbed away.

Peter Hain, Labour's campaign manager, said his party had evidence which "blows away" the Welsh nationalists' claim that they were not a separatist organisation. The Welsh party had been engaged in a "systematic operation" to remove from the public eye publications which demonstrated its commitment to separation.

Michael German, leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats, said: "No matter how he wriggles, Dafydd Wigley cannot escape the fact that Plaid Cymru was born out of a desire to break away from England."

Ieuan Wyn Jones, Plaid's election campaign director, said that Labour's attack showed that Millbank's "darkest tendencies" were at work.

Rod Richards, leader of the Welsh Conservatives, meanwhile alleged that Gwynedd council was guilty of discrimination by refusing to employ non-Welsh speakers or those who had no intention of learning the language. He claimed the policy was costing the local authority £400,000 a year.

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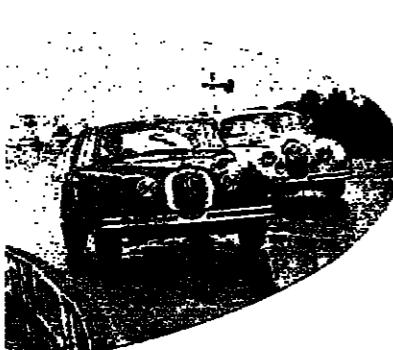
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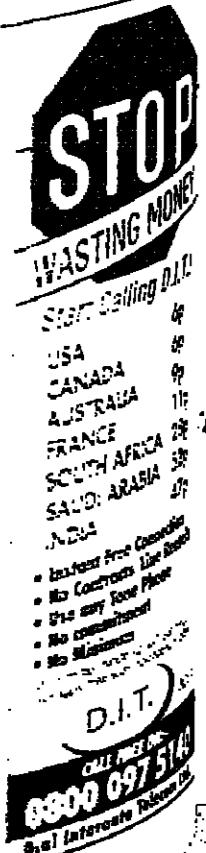
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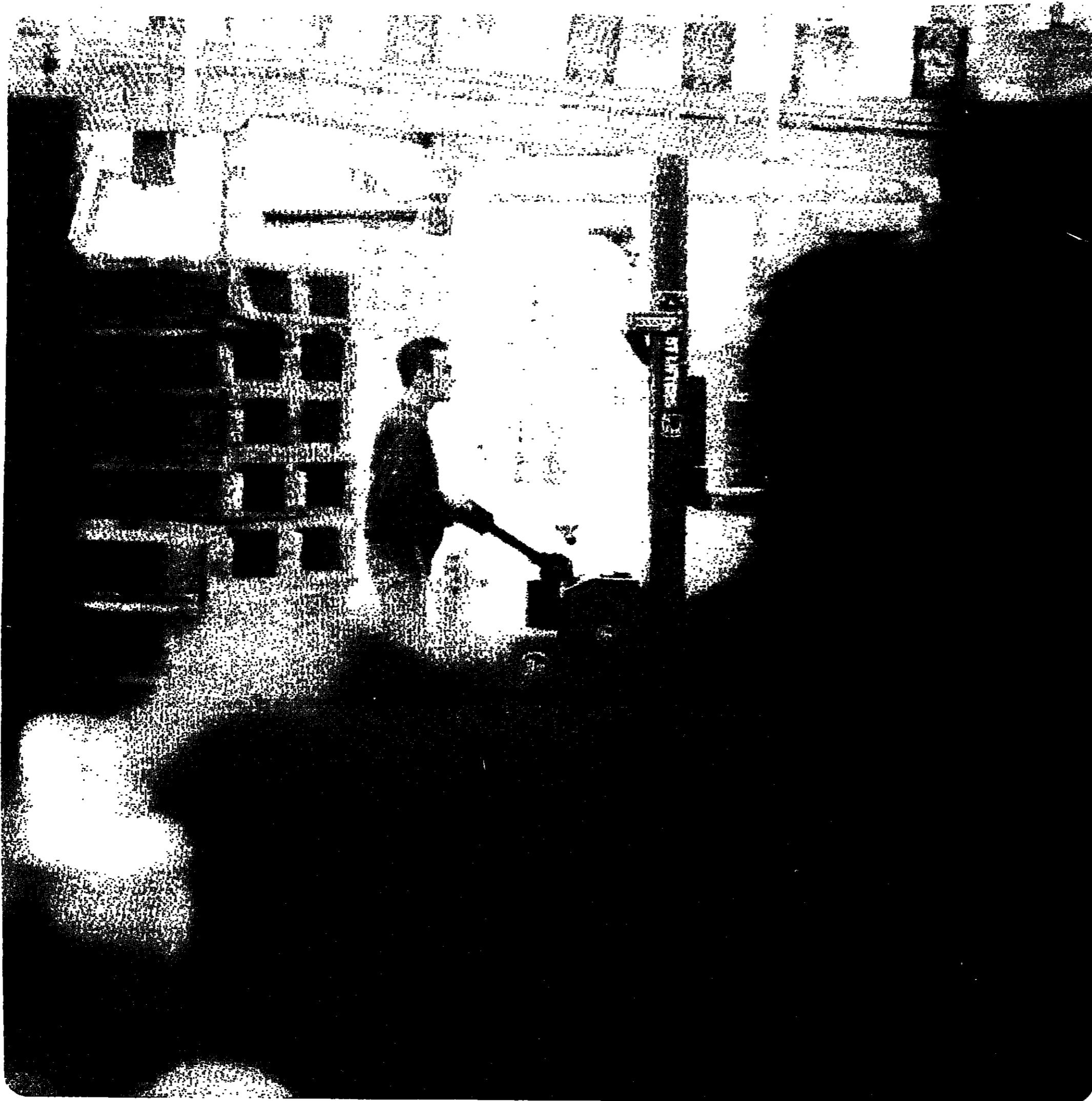


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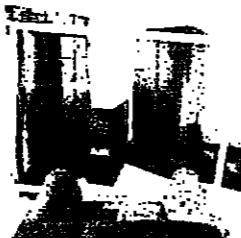
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Body piercing craze 'threatens children'

BY CLARE GARNER

MINISTERS ARE being urged to introduce guidelines to prevent children having their bodies pierced without their parents' consent.

David Clark, Labour MP for South Shields, has tabled parliamentary questions calling for legislation after learning that a 13-year-old daughter of a constituent had been body pierced.

The insertion of studs, rings and chains through various parts of the body was once the preserve of punks. But these days body piercings are in high demand, particularly among 17- to 24-year-olds.

Mr Clark is concerned about the danger of infection. "What adults do to their own bodies is up to them. But there should be reasonable protection to ensure this does not happen to minors," he said.

Body piercing began centuries ago in the Orient, but the recent body-art phen-



Mel B of the Spice Girls and Zara Phillips (above). Elaine Davidson (right) has possibly gone too far

omenon has been called both "New Age tribalism" and "perversion chic".

The model Stella Tennant helped elevate piercings to their now fashionable status by appearing on catwalks with rings in her navel, chin, nose, ears and eyebrows.

Last week two debutantes appeared at the Berkeley Ball in London with pierced navels and lips, and Zara Phillips,

the daughter of Princess Anne, has had a metal stud put through her tongue.

Ms Phillips was not, however, the first royal to indulge in piercing. Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria, is said to have inserted a ring through the end of his penis and attached a weighted chain to keep it still while out riding. The custom has been dubbed a "Prince Albert" ever since.



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Lawyer jailed for stealing legacies

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

A LAWYER with a string of illustrious clients, including Dodi Fayed and Princess Michael of Kent, was sentenced to three years in prison at the Old Bailey yesterday for plundering legacies to orphaned children and charities.

Michael Palmer, a former senior partner of a West End law firm with links to Britain's overseas security service, MI6, was involved in a £250,000 conspiracy to defraud and steal funds from two estates he controlled as an executor.

The first arose from the "tragic deaths" of Jane and David Elton, who left two young children in the care of two legal guardians, said Anthony Hacking QC, in the prosecution.

Palmer was godfather to one of the children.

A spokesman for the SFO said: "Michael Palmer used and abused his position as a solicitor and betrayed those who placed their trust in him."



Michael Palmer: Showed 'protracted dishonesty'

The second plundered estate, left by his friend Geoffrey Roberts, who died in 1994, made bequests to various Aids charities. They had yet to receive a penny, the court heard.

"These were no spur-of-the-moment frauds, but showed protracted dishonesty by sophisticated methods to disguise what was going on," said Mr Hacking.

"Palmer got himself into financial difficulties because of his lifestyle and because his firm was not doing very well commercially at the time. His debts fluctuated from £385,000 to £287,000 over the period."

Palmer had admitted 17 charges of conspiracy to defraud, theft, forgery and false accounting involving over £250,000 from 1992 to 1996.

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) decided last month not to proceed with other charges which Palmer had denied. Counsel for the prosecution denied yesterday that the charges had been reduced to suppress evidence relating to Palmer's alleged connection

Mr Justice Collins told Palmer: "It is always a tragedy to see someone like yourself in the dock admitting serious dishonesty. Solicitors are in a special position as far as the public is concerned – they expect to be able to trust them."

"The other side of the coin is that, when it comes to punishment, the court recognises that you have lost everything. You will never be able to practise as a solicitor again."

Complaints about solicitors hit record high

BY ROBERT VERKAIK

COMPLAINTS AGAINST solicitors have reached an all-time high, according to a new report. But 80 per cent of all new complaints were generated by a 20 per cent "hard core" of problem solicitors.

The figures revealed in the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors (OSS) annual report today show that last year 31,672 complaints were made against the profession, compared with 23,452 in 1996. One solicitor was investigated for marrying a client's former wife, while another charged £1,500 for attending a funeral.

The report will confirm that the backlog in outstanding complaints stands at 9,000. The OSS admits that figures for this year indicate that the situation is not expected to improve.

A survey of 300 complaints included in the report reveals serious misgivings about the standard of service provided by the OSS. Major areas of concern centre on delay, and communication between the OSS and complainants.

TERENCE BLACKER

One boy confessed that, whatever his subject, his story became all gory

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

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Israelis demolish Palestinians' homes

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Jerusalem

THE BULLDOZER took just a few minutes yesterday to turn the house of Maher Izzat Hassan, a Palestinian taxi-driver living on the outskirts of Jerusalem, into a heap of concrete rubble. He said: "I did not know the Israelis were going to demolish it until they came this morning."

On the other side of the narrow valley of Isawiya, just below the Hebrew University, another bulldozer, closely guarded by Israeli soldiers, was tearing apart the house of Abdul Razak as-Sheikh, a 35-year-old building worker. By the time it had finished, the only things left standing were three small green plants he had recently planted outside the door of his home.

As news of the house demolitions in Isawiya spread among the 155,000 Palestinians who live in Jerusalem, many said that they feared their own homes would be next. Israeli authorities routinely deny Palestinians building permits, so whole neighbourhoods have been built illegally. Demolition orders have already been served on 850 houses.

These are the final weeks of the Israeli election campaign and Palestinians are frightened that they are seeing the start of a wave of demolitions designed to show Israeli voters that Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, is strengthening Israel's grip on Jerusalem.

"It is all to do with the elections," said Ziyad Abu Humus, whose own house is under threat of destruction. "Maybe the bulldozers will come for my house soon."

Danny Seidmann, an Israeli human rights lawyer, agrees. After watching the destruction of the houses in Isawiya, he said: "The timing of it is not accidental. Another five demolitions are planned for tomorrow. Netanyahu is basing his campaign on the defence of Jerusalem, so these poor un-



Palestinians yesterday watching the demolition of their homes in Jerusalem AP

fortunate people lose the roof over their heads." Mr Seidmann added that tensions were already high among Palestinians and a single spark could cause an explosion.

For the moment, people in Isawiya, most of whose houses are under threat, look apprehensive rather than politically

militant. "They don't give permission for people to build so we don't know what to do," lamented Latifa Dorbas, as she tried to salvage the furniture of one house.

Pressure on Palestinians in Jerusalem has intensified over the past five years. Since 1993, when the Oslo accords were

signed, those living on the West Bank - often within sight of the city - have not been able to enter it without a permit. The value of a Jerusalem identity card has thus been increased, but the Israeli Interior Ministry began a campaign to withdraw these three years ago and has so far confiscated 2,179,

according to the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem. This has had the effect of forcing more Palestinians to come back into Jerusalem because they fear losing their residency rights.

Why these rights matter is explained by the case of Fayed Zeitawi, a Palestinian from Jerusalem who was knifed earlier in the year, apparently by a Jewish serial stabber. His hospital fees were about £11,200. But his right to reside in Jerusalem was withdrawn in 1998 and with it his right to health insurance. He will have to pay his medical expenses himself.

The daily *Haaretz* newspaper notes that "as a Palestinian [Mr Zeitawi] cannot be recognised as the victim of terrorist activity".

In addition to trying to reduce the number of Palestinians in the West Bank, the government is rapidly increasing the number of Jewish settlements and settlers in the area. United States satellite photographs reveal that Mr Netanyahu has built 12 new settlements on hilltops since the Wye Plantation accords with the Palestinians - now frozen - were brokered by the US President, Bill Clinton, last October. Another six settlements were built immediately before the Wye meeting.

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, told Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Foreign Minister, that the new settlements break an explicit Israeli promise to the US not to build new settlements or expand existing ones. In the past three years the number of settlers on the West Bank has risen from 150,000 to 180,000. Housing starts in the settlements last year were up 105 per cent, compared with only 20 per cent in Israel.

New access roads are designed to carve up the territory, isolating Palestinians and making it more and more difficult on the ground for Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, ever to establish a Palestinian state.

Timor militiamen 'drank blood after massacre'

BY DIARMID O'SULLIVAN
in Dili



Anti-independence militiamen in Aileu yesterday AP

FEARS ARE growing in East Timor that local militias allied to Indonesia are planning to crush the independence movement by violence. The militiamen, who butchered at least 12 people in Dili at the weekend, are now massing their forces across the Indonesian-occupied territory.

Several thousand militiamen mustered yesterday in the hill town of Aileu, south of Dili, where 20 of them drank blood mixed with wine. "In East Timor tradition, this shows that we are in a serious situation and we are ready to face it," said Basilio Araujo, their spokesman. Mr Araujo claims the militiamen are only defending themselves from the independence movement's guerrillas. But he has said on Australian television: "We will kill as many people as we want."

Supporters of independence have launched some pinprick attacks, but the militias have been far more brutal. The armed wing of the independence movement, Falintil, has a few hundred guerrillas in the

hills but they are under orders not to go into Dili.

The parade in Aileu ended without violence, though after a similar parade in Dili on Saturday a thousand armed militiamen raided the house of a local independence leader, Manuel Carrascalao. At least 12 of the 126 refugees in the house were shot or hacked to death. The fate of the rest is unclear.

Militiamen admit that leaders of the National Council of

Timorese Resistance (CNRT), the main pro-independence group, are on their hit-list. Mr Carrascalao and another CNRT leader, Leandro Isaac, are now sheltering with the police. Unlike the army, the police have made some effort to save lives.

A well-placed source fears the next target may be the town of Baucau, east of Dili. The CNRT leader there, Mario Reis, has refused to leave his

Gandhi stakes claim to India

BY IAN MACKINNON
in New Delhi

THE SHAPE of India's new government, led by Sonia Gandhi's Congress party, will become clear by this evening, according to one of the key powerbrokers in the political wrangling.

The former actress-turned-politician Jayaram Jayalalitha revealed that progress had been made in the search for a replacement administration after the fall of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led coalition. But while Mrs Gandhi, widow of the former prime minister Rajiv, conceded that Congress would stake a claim to govern, she refused to disclose details.

If Mrs Gandhi succeeds in winning the support of as many as 26 parties from the regions and the left, she will form India's sixth government in little more than three years. But there were signs yesterday that Congress, with only 139 MPs, well short of the 271 needed for a majority in parliament, was struggling to win over several crucial small parties to make the numbers tally.

Key among them were two left-wing parties, the Revolutionary Socialists and Forward Block, who object to the previous Congress government's economic reform policies, and the regional Tamil Maanila Congress, which refuses to be part of any coalition containing its arch-rival Ms Jayalalitha. Together they command a vital eight votes which would make a Congress coalition viable.

A day of deal-making in Delhi saw frantic efforts to persuade the parties to come on board.

But Ms Jayalalitha was adamant that there was no pressure on her All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazagham party to remain outside the government in order to win over the wavering.

Turkish far right on the rise

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER
in Istanbul

"This election is a crossroads for the Turkish nation and democracy," said the MHP's leader Devlet Bahceli. In Turkey's last elections, his party failed even to win the 10 per cent of the national vote needed to qualify for parliament.

The far right gains will transform Turkey's political arena. Political Islam, which has dominated the agenda in recent years, was delivered a crushing defeat. The Islamist Virtue Party, seen as Mr Ecevit's only

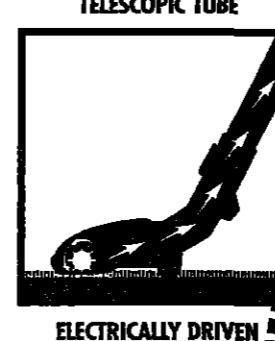
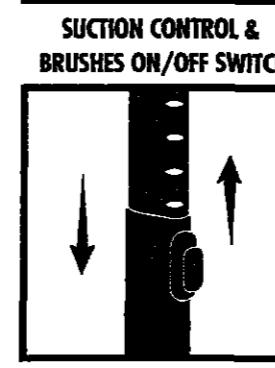
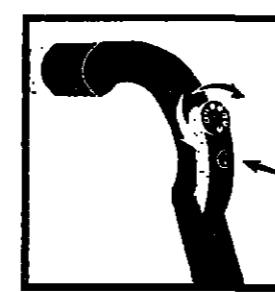
challenger in the run-up to the polls, saw its share of the vote plummet as it limped in third place. "The period of using religion for political purposes is over," said Mr Ecevit.

Mr Ecevit is expected to remain in power at the head of a government including the MHP. Ardent nationalism is de rigueur in mainstream Turkish politics, and Mr Ecevit is no exception. With the MHP's backing, his policies are likely to be more chauvinist than ever.

The MHP will move Turkey towards a more nationalist line in relations with the European

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became all gory

REVIEW PAGE 4

INSURANCE

SAFETY MOTOR INSURANCE

184

SAGA

They gave a residents' working party – but nobody came

'RESPECTED Muscovites! You are invited to help clean up your local backyards. Please come to Grep on Saturday morning and we will find a job for you."

"You're not thinking of volunteering for that, are you?" asked my neighbour Tanya, lazily. She was sunning herself on the pavement at Samotechny Lane, sitting not in a deck chair but in an old car seat from the wreck her son, Lyosha the tearaway, was cannibalising.

"Well," I said, "I thought I might. After all, it's not like the old *subbotnik*, it's just to improve the environment, isn't it?"

In Communist times, Russians were made to celebrate Lenin's birthday by doing unpaid overtime on the nearest Saturday to 22 April – hence *subbotnik*, from the word for Saturday. Usually, they washed windows or did other spring cleaning at their factories and offices. The work was supposed to be voluntary but they earned black marks if they refused to join the collective effort. The sign on the wall at Samotechny Lane was a polite invitation. There was no sense of coercion any more. After winter, the yards were filthy. And I was curious, so I decided

to join the cleaning campaign.

On Saturday morning, there was a deadly hush in the yard, as on a public holiday. I looked out of the window but could see nobody at all. Undeterred, I went to Grep, the council office responsible for repairs and maintenance in those flats still owned by the state and for the upkeep of communal facilities such as roofs, lifts and staircases.

The door was flung open by a man in goggles, with an overpowering smell of vodka on his breath. I had encountered this flying ace before.

I had woken up a few morn-

ings earlier to see his face at my third-floor window. He was riding in the basket of a crane. Our balconies had been disintegrating, dropping brick fragments on to passers-by below. For some reason, I thought he was going to fix my balcony. But what he actually did was to bash the bricks with a metal pole so that all the loose ones fell down. Then he rode away, leaving me with a balcony full of holes on to which I would be mad to step out.

Now here was this Biggles again. "There's a volunteer for you!" he shouted and lumbered off down the Grep corridor. The manager, Galina Mikhailovna, invited me into her control room. "There's no one else here yet," she said, "so we might as well put the kettle on."

Over tea, she told me about her work. Like a Star Wars commander, she sat at a huge panel of buttons, knobs and flashing lights. "People call in,

complaining that their toilets are blocked or the light bulbs need changing in the staircases and so on. We send out plumbers and joiners and electricians."

Jobs that in the West are mostly done on a private basis are carried out here by the council workmen. Galina Mikhailovna admitted that while Russians are often house-proud inside their flats, they take little care of the areas that belong to everybody and therefore to nobody.

We had another cup of tea. Galina Mikhailovna answered an emergency call from someone stuck in a lift. I was still the

only volunteer for the yard clean-up. Biggles, really an Azeri called Vagif, and a couple of other handymen, being Grep employees, were obliged to be present, but they had arrived with hangovers and were already resorting to the hair of the dog.

"You could go out in the yard on your own and pick up a few twigs," said Galina Mikhailovna. I looked out of the window at the pot-holed yard, needing proper asphalt, turf and saplings to renew it in any meaningful way, and was overcome with a sense of futility. Instead, I went home and swept

up the cigarette butts that had been dropped in the immediate area outside my own front door.

Then, because I could no longer sit on my balcony, I took a book out into the nearby Children's Park. It was about Africa – cruelty, absurdity, heat and dust – but it only made me think of Russia – cruelty, absurdity, cold and mud.

Tanya strolled past me and gave me a wink. An old man sat on a bench, playing an accordion. Life is short and Russia is eternal. Just enjoy it while the summer lasts.

HELEN WOMACK

Reichstag is opened for one day only

GERMANY'S HISTORIC parliament building woke yesterday from more than half a century of slumber; its new glass dome, shimmering in the sunshine as the chamber filled with the reassuring sound of heckling.

The Reichstag was reopened for one symbolic day to show the world that Germans were ready to reclaim their past – warts and all – and become a normal nation again. It began with brass bands, beaming politicians and light-hearted ceremonies, but inevitably reached its climax with sombre assurances that lessons had been learned.

The fact is that the capital of the new republic is broke. The Reichstag cost DM600m of federal money and was built, as the German workers outside never stopped lamenting, mostly by cheaper foreign workers.

The architect was also a foreigner. Sir Norman Foster was in attendance, handing over the key to the building and receiving several rounds of generous applause from MPs for his good work.

As the politicians wrapped up the proceedings, another symbolic event was unfolding a few blocks away. President Roman Herzog and Ignatz Bubis were opening up the new five-storey headquarters of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, to replace their much humbler abode in Bonn. Now only the government is missing from this capital.

For the next few months, MPs will go back to Bonn to pack their bags and prepare for the shift to Berlin. Some politicians will gather in the Reichstag next month to elect the country's president, and then almost everyone will be on the move to their new home.

On 6 September the Reichstag reopens in earnest, and perhaps it will stay open a little longer than the last time.

Indeed, as MPs discussed the progress of reunification under the halo created by the dome, anarchist demonstra-

BY IMRE KARACS
in Berlin

tors were clashing outside with mounted police, unemployed building workers were chanting "The Reichstag stands and we are on the dole", and nurses picketed in protest against imminent hospital closures.

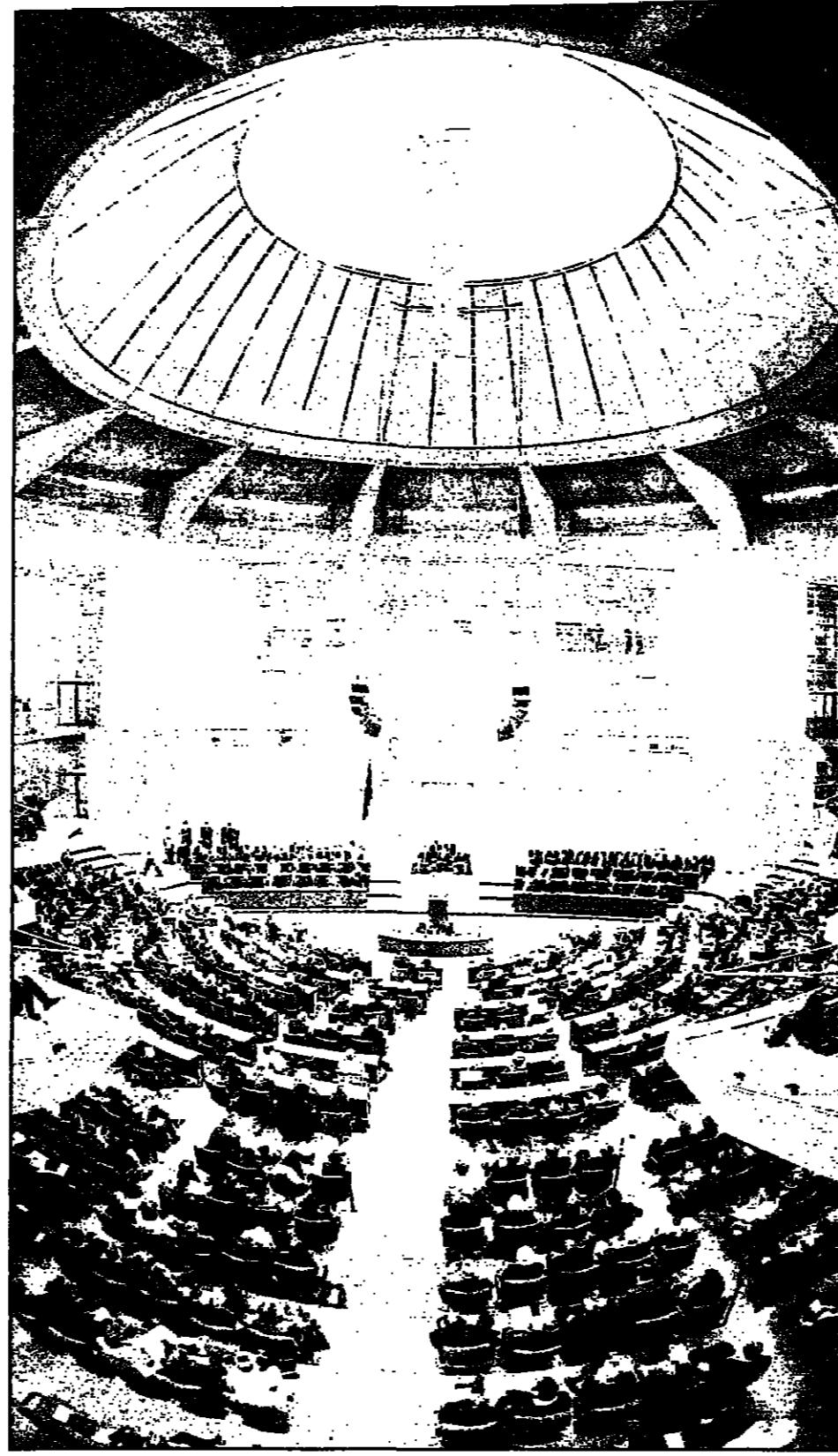
The Reichstag was also a forerunner. Sir Norman Foster was in attendance, handing over the key to the building and receiving several rounds of generous applause from MPs for his good work.

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The inaugural session of the Reichstag chamber yesterday



Adolph Hitler making a speech in the Reichstag

Foundations of German history

BY IMRE KARACS
in Berlin

1871 – Wilhelm I of Prussia is declared Kaiser of the German Empire. The Reichstag, meaning "Imperial Assembly", is convened under the restrictive constitution drafted by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. It holds its deliberations at a disused china factory in Berlin.

1884 – Construction of new Reichstag building begins, under the architect Paul Wallot.

5 December 1894 – Kaiser Wilhelm II opens the new Reichstag, describing the architecture as "the summit of tastelessness", and the building as the "Reich's Monkey House". Members have little influence on the government.

9 November 1918 – Germany is defeated, Wilhelm II takes flight, and from a window of the Reichstag the Social Democratic politician Philipp Scheidemann proclaims the republic. A mile away, the Communist leader Karl Liebknecht declares a Bolshevik-style republic.

1922 – First attempt to renovate the Reichstag, stranded on the eastern side of the Berlin Wall.

9 November 1989 – East Germany opens the Berlin Wall.

3 October 1990 – Reunited Germany is proclaimed on the steps of the Reichstag.

20 June 1991 – The Bundestag is elected in Bonn to move the government to Berlin.

1992 – Sir Norman Foster wins the Reichstag renovation contract.

June-July 1995 – Christo wraps the Reichstag in silver.

AP 30 January 1933 – Adolf Hitler

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Feminists protest at French knicker show

BY CLAIRE SOARES
in Paris

ONE MALE shopper said: "It reminds me of the red light district in Amsterdam", as he glanced at the window display at Galeries Lafayette. The Paris department store is using real mannequins to model a range of lingerie by the designer Chantal Thomass.

Since 13 April three models have been on show in windows designed to look like rooms. The models, scantly clad in a variety of bras, frilly knickers, suspender and silken gowns, sip champagne in the conservatory, file their nails in the bathroom, and prepare snacks in the kitchen.

There was no sign of the girls yesterday. A store spokesman said Monday was their day off, but could not say if they would return today.

Many passers-by appreciated the displays. Others believe the shows insult women

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Legal Notices

No. 002364 of 1999 IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE CHANCERY DIVISION COMPANIES COURT IN THE MATTER OF CIGNITO LIMITED

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1986

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

that a Petition was on 31 March 1999 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for the confirmation of the cancellation of the share Premium Account of the above-named company.

AND NOTICE IS FURTHER

GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Registrar of the Companies Court at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL on Wednesday the 28th day of April 1999.

ANY creditor or shareholder of the Company desirous of opposing the making of an Order for the confirmation of the cancellation of the share Premium Account should appear at the time of the hearing in person or by Counsel for that purpose.

A copy of the said Petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undermentioned solicitors on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

Dated the 15th day of April 1999

Garricks, Abbotts House

Abbey Street

Reading

RG1 3BD

Solicitors to the Company

The Insolvency Act 1986 DOME CONSULTANCY LIMITED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

that a Meeting of the Creditors of the

above-named Company will be held on 10th May 1999 at 4 Chancery Lane, London EC4M 1EP

at 2.30 p.m. for the purpose

mentioned in Section 99 et seq. of the said Act.

NOTICE IS FURTHER

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Brazil in \$1bn bond sale

BRAZIL WILL this week tap the international capital markets for the first time in a year, selling at least \$1bn of five-year bonds. The bond sale, expected on Thursday, is the latest sign that investors are beginning to return to emerging markets following the crisis sparked last summer by the Russian debt default. A rebound in the Brazilian currency, an oil price rally and a \$41.5bn international rescue package have all helped restore confidence in the Brazilian economy, analysts said. If Thursday goes well it could pave the way for the sale of up to \$300 of Brazilian bonds this year.

Rudd makes £3.2m from options

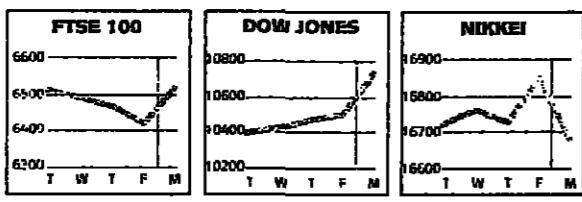
SIR NIGEL RUDD (pictured), chairman of Williams, the industrial group, made £3.2m last year after exercising options. The options were awarded 10 years ago and had to be cashed before the end of last year or they would have expired. The company said yesterday that most of the proceeds had been reinvested in Williams shares.

Roger Carr, the chief executive made £1.5m from cashing in options. Sir Nigel's salary, including benefits and awards, has come down from £792,000 in 1997 to £765,000 last year. This year he will receive £644,000. Mr Carr's salary rose last year to £228,000 from £665,000 the year before.

Trinity set for no-strike deal

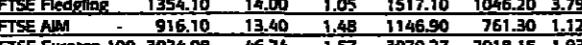
TRINITY, Britain's largest regional newspaper group, is expected this week to sign a no-strike deal with the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union for its Western Mail and Echo subsidiary in Cardiff. Journalists on the titles are resisting the proposed agreement, but management says there is a majority in favour among representatives of other employees. The agreement prevents legislation on union recognition and could set a precedent for other companies in the newspaper industry.

STOCK MARKETS



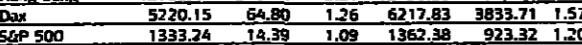
INDICES	Close	Change	Change %	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yr chg
FTSE 100	6515.30	9.70	1.48	6539.90	4599.20	2.41
FTSE 250	5849.60	53.20	0.92	5970.90	4247.60	3.01
FTSE 350	3110.80	42.50	1.39	3103.00	2210.40	2.95
FTSE All Share	3010.20	40.55	1.37	3000.33	2143.53	2.58
FTSE Small Cap	2489.60	22.50	0.91	2793.80	1834.40	4.28
FTSE Fleeting	1354.10	14.00	1.05	1517.10	1046.20	3.79
FTSE AIM	916.10	13.40	1.48	1146.90	761.30	1.72
FTSE Eurotop 100	3024.08	46.74	1.57	3079.27	2018.15	1.93
FTSE Eurotop 300	1307.40	18.26	1.42	1332.07	980.63	2.81
Dow Jones	10734.85	243.76	2.22	10282.54	7400.30	1.47
Nikkei	15674.21	-177.37	-1.05	17166.05	12782.90	0.76
Hang Seng	12766.44	276.14	2.21	12490.30	6544.70	2.74
Dax	3220.15	64.80	2.06	3217.83	3833.31	1.57
S&P 500	1333.24	14.30	1.09	1362.36	923.32	1.32
Nasdaq	2464.50	-16.29	-0.75	2501.00	1290.00	0.24
Toronto 300	7020.39	8.37	0.12	7337.70	5320.90	1.49
British Bourses	11726.25	300.24	2.63	12247.27	4575.60	3.02
Belgium BEL20	156.90	0.53	0.31	1696.26	2.00	1.30
Belgium BEL20	156.90	10.85	2.00	600.65	356.58	1.27
France CAC 40	4279.24	78.43	1.82	4416.00	2881.21	1.65
Miller MBD30	36763.00	209.00	0.57	3917.00	24175.00	1.05
Madrid IBEX 35	8981.70	74.40	0.85	10589.80	6869.90	1.90
Italy Overall	5318.97	10.11	0.19	5811.70	3732.57	1.55
S Korea Comp	756.59	41.45	5.72	740.28	277.37	0.91
Australia ASX	3113.10	13.30	0.43	3104.40	2388.70	2.98

INTEREST RATES



MONEY MARKET RATES	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	5.32	-2.21	5.35	-2.16	4.51	-1.26	4.52	-1.17	
US	5.00	-0.69	5.27	-0.58	—	—	5.57	0.36	
Japan	0.15	-0.53	0.21	-0.47	1.58	-0.22	2.34	-0.06	
Germany	2.62	-1.02	2.71	-1.24	3.87	-0.98	4.87	-0.53	

CURRENCIES



POUND	at 8pm	Change	*Yr Ago	DOLLAR	at 8pm	Change	*Yr Ago	Euro	at 8pm	Change	*Yr Ago			
Dollar	1.6080	-0.356	1.6775	0.6219	-0.13	0.5861		Euro	1.5148	+0.883	1.4079			
Euro	1.5148	+0.883	1.4079	0.9423	-12.78	0.8571		Yen	189.74	-10.10	221.56	1.1801	-12.00	1.3212
Yen	189.74	-10.10	221.56	1.1801	-12.00	1.3212		Yen	103.90	+0.40	107.70	1.0820	+0.20	109.50

OTHER INDICATORS

Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Chg	Yr Ago	Next day	
Brent Oil (\$)	13.60	0.05	13.82	GDP	115.40	3.00	112.00
Gold (\$)	283.95	-0.30	307.75	RPM	163.70	2.10	160.30
Silver (\$)	5.07	0.05	6.28	Base Rates	5.25	7.25	5.00

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TOURIST RATES

Australia (\$)	2.3986	Medican (nuevo peso)	13.97
Austria (schillings)	20.22	Netherlands (gulders)	3.2402
Belgium (francs)	59.44	New Zealand (\$)	2.0240
Canada (\$)	2.3277	Norway (krone)	12.23
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8484	Portugal (escudos)	293.58
Denmark (krone)	11.00	Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.8759
Finland (markka)	8.7739	Singapore (\$)	2.5971
France (francs)	9.6021	South Africa (rand)	9.4472
Germany (marks)	2.8749	Spain (pesetas)	249.13
Greece (drachma)	479.46	Sweden (kronor)	13.17
Hong Kong (\$)	12.12	Switzerland (francs)	2.3654
Ireland (pounds)	1.1572	Thailand (bahts)	54.30
Indian (rupees)	62.13	Turkey (lira)	602981
Israel (shekels)	6.0059	USA (\$)	1.5768
Italy (lira)	2663		
Japan (yen)	186.97		
Malaysia (ringgit)	5.8236		
Malta (lira)	0.6241		

Rates for indication purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

Derek Pain, page 15

'Meagre terms' fuel hopes of rival Asda bid

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

KINGFISHER AND Asda yesterday unveiled further details of their planned £1.8bn merger though the City still focused on the meagre terms for Asda shareholders and speculated that a rival bid may yet emerge. Although Asda shares fell 5p to 193.75p this is still above the 186p price implied by the Kingfisher merger terms, indicating a higher bid. Kingfisher's shares closed 44p lower at 796p. One of Asda's institutional investors said: "We do not regard the terms as lavish but then this is a merger not a contested bid." Wal-Mart of the US or Carrefour of France are seen as the most likely counter-bidders. However, both Asda and Kingfisher deny their merger is a defensive move to block Wal-Mart's entry into the UK market.

In a delayed stock market announcement that forced the abandonment of the planned press conference yesterday, Asda and Kingfisher said the merger would yield £100m of cost savings of which half would come in the first year. The deal would create a new retailing force with combined sales of £17bn, the two companies said.

Sir Geoff Mulcahy, Kingfisher's chief executive who will also run the merged group, said: "This is another important step on the road to being a global winner. There is an excellent strategic fit between the two companies, which reinforces our market leading positions and financial strength."

About half the expected cost savings will come from securing better terms with suppliers, with further savings in distribution and administrative ex-

penses. The group would move to a global procurement strategy, modelling itself on the Wal-Mart set-up. The benefits would be greatest in the £1.5bn of sales where Asda and Kingfisher overlap, such as in confectionery and children's clothing.

The statement confirmed that Asda's George label of clothing would be sold through Woolworths outlets. Asda's non-food ranges would be strengthened by products from its Woolworths, Superdrug and Comet chains. The group would exploit new

opportunities in digital technology such as Internet shopping and digital television channels.

The statement made much of the enlarged group's financial muscle with net assets of £5bn, operating cashflow of £1.2bn and low gearing. It said this strength would enable it to play a full part in the consolidation of Europe's DIY and electrical markets,

Bonds are the punters' favourite

News Analysis: Low interest rates are pushing record numbers of savers away from deposit accounts and into stock market-related investments

EVIDENCE THAT British savers are engaged in a massive switch of funds away from low-interest deposit accounts began to mount up yesterday when investment firms reported unprecedented sales of share-based products.

Norwich Union, one of the largest life insurers, reported record sales of lump-sum investment bonds in the first three months of 1999. Sales of the bonds, which allow savers to participate in the stock market while reducing their risk, more than doubled to £164m.

Earlier this month, Axa Sun Life reported a similarly spectacular jump, with sales of lump sum bonds up 109 per cent to £435.5m. Friends Provident, another life insurer, reported a 64 per cent leap in sales.

The results signal a quiet but highly significant boom in share-based investments on a scale which rivals the boom in Personal Equity Plans in the first quarter of this year.

Both Norwich Union, led by chief executive Richard Harvey, and Axa Sun Life attribute the boom to the tiny returns now available on deposit accounts. Hundreds of thousands of investors, most of them retired, depend on getting a high rate of interest on their savings to supplement their income.

In the last two years alone, savings rates have followed mortgage rates in plummeting to their lowest level since the 1960s. Save £10,000, lock it up for 90 days, and one of the best interest rates available is from the Alliance & Leicester – just 2.25 per cent. Put it on instant access and the rates barely beat inflation – the Midland Bank's instant access rate is just 2.75 per cent.

Ned Cazalet, a leading expert on the investment industry at Cazalet Financial Consulting,

BY ANDREW VERTIY

said: "There is an awful lot of money sitting in the accounts of building societies earning less than 3 per cent. Since the exit from the Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992 the psychology has remained that you can get interest rates of 10 per cent. But most people don't continually check these things: it's only now that people are properly waking up to just how low they have got."

Appealed by the rates, savers are beginning to shift into two types of lump-sum investment bond. With-profits bonds, based on the bonuses dolled out every year from life insurers' funds, typically offer 6 or 7 per cent. There is also a multi-billion pound trade in equity bonds – derivatives-based products that offer to imitate the stock market while protecting against a crash.

Ken Raynor, an investment expert at Bradford & Bingley, one of the country's largest independent financial advisers, says: "More than 40 per cent of investors are looking for income rather than growth from their savings and there is a definite move to creating more income. People's perspectives are changing as their income from traditional places reduces."

But there is a flip-side to the boom. Independent financial advisers warn that savers must avoid rushing away from deposits without realising exactly what they are losing – the fact that in a deposit account, their capital is guaranteed.

"People need to be careful about this. When they see annual bonuses of 6 or 7 per cent they need to realise that it is not the same thing as interest rates. There's a risk to their capital involved," says Mr Raynor.

Industry observers fear an



Richard Harvey, chief executive of Norwich Union, with a cut out from an advertisement designed to encourage stock market investment. FT

other worrying trend may be at work among the people who sell the products, financial advisers. The fear is that advisers are selling them in such quantities only because they are afraid to sell their normal core products – pensions.

The Financial Services Authority (FSA), the City regulator, recently issued guidance to advisers on personal pensions. The guidance can only be ignored at the risk of losing the right to work in financial services. It warned advisers against selling pension products with high up-front charges.

The guidance stemmed from the authority's concern about stakeholder pensions, the Government's much-cherished scheme for encouraging retirement saving.

The FSA was worried that the bread and butter of a typical high street IFA – advisers are now concentrating on investment business – and bonds are one type of product that still pays a high commission.

Les Owen, chief executive of Axa Sun Life, is warning that ultimately this could defeat the Government's aim of selling more pensions, causing a "pensions blight". Financial advisers, for now, feel safer selling investment bonds.

most types of personal pension. Without high up-front charges, there is usually no high up-front commission.

Afraid of selling pensions –

INTEREST RATES ON SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

What the big high street banks will pay
 (£10,000 deposit)

Provider	Account	Rate, %
NatWest Bank	no notice	2.95
	90 days' notice	3.25
Midland Bank	no notice	2.75
	60 days' notice	4.70
Lloyds Bank	no notice	3.75
	90 days' notice	3.90
Barclays Bank	no notice	2.50
	60 days' notice	4.25
Abbey National	no notice	1.55
	90 days' notice	3.99
Royal Bank of Scotland	no notice	2.30
	60 days' notice	4.70

Source: Moneyfacts

Line extension, the Docklands Light Railway and Croydon's tram network is retiring after working over 30 years on the capital's infrastructure.

In 1988 Baroness Thatcher visited the site and said Mr Broome's venture was "a wonderful example of private enterprise and local government working hand in hand for the benefit of Britain."

The Iron Lady continued: "This colossal undertaking has that touch of pure genius ... that has always made Britain great."

In the event Mr Broome managed to remove the station's roof before the money ran out. The site has remained derelict ever since.

"I'm pretty sure the sun will rise tomorrow," says Mr Bayliss. "I'm almost sure the Jubilee extension will be open in time. They should get fat lady to sing when it opens."

Mr Bayliss's one great regret is the death of Crossrail, another project designed to ease

the capital's congestion. "But a new London Mayor may revive it," he says, hopefully.

Millennium bust

BACK IN January, I was having lunch with Roger Oldfield, a senior corporate rescue partner with KPMG, when halfway through the meal he was unexpectedly summoned away on "an urgent mission". He was forbidden to divulge what it was.

Yesterday, Mr Oldfield re-

vealed that he had been appointed receiver to Prove It 2000, a millennium bug consultancy based in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, which had gone bust.

"It had a blue-chip client, including Daimler-Benz and I managed to sell it on," Mr Oldfield says. "Which is just as well, as since millennium bug firms 'by their very nature have a limited shelf life'."

E-mail: j.willcock@independent.co.uk

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Associated British Foods (D)	1.96bn (1.96bn)	109.0m (192.0m)	5.8p (14.5p)	4.75p (4.25p)	-	-
Barclays (F)	37.1m (23.1m)	1.5m (1.3m)	10.10 (8.62p)	2.5p (2.25p)	-	-
CNC Properties (F)	15.41m (11.35m)	5.2m (4.1m)	9.3p (10.8p)	3.75 (3.20p)	-	-
Dimension Data (F)	38.78m (38.29m)	0.655m (1.207m)	-3.47p (1.56p)	nd (1.60p)	-	-
First Direct (F)	12.77m (12.67m)	0.255m (0.268m)	1.5p (1.49p)	1.5p (1.49p)	-	-
Harvey Nash Group (F)	104.65m (51.14m)	6.9m (6.0m)	8.57m (4.78m)	20.05p (18.10p)	-	-
HII Entertainment (F)	4.73m (3.23m)	1.375m (1.149m)	5.50p (4.95p)	0.65p (0.55p)	-	-
Metz Equipment Rental (F)	4.73m (3.23m)	0.708m (0.645m)	2.00p (1.04p)	0.30p (-)	-	-
Orbis Technology Corp (F)	US 352.89m (11.02m)	1.464m (0.945m)	4.9c (-)	-	-	-
Stephenson (F)	10.91m (13.80m)	-0.22m (-17.7m)	-3.1p (-5.1p)	-	-	-
(F) - final (I) - interim *Special Dividend 50p						

Raising money for a dream car

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS



THE GERMANS, Japanese and Americans may dominate British mass-market car manufacturing, but the 100-odd remaining British-owned car makers are in good health.

So says Ian Macpherson,

who is raising £3.2m on Offer for his Silverstone-based company, Strathcarron Sports Cars.

He needs the cash to manufacture the Strathcarron SC-4,

a £20,000 sports car which uses the company's very latest racing car technology.

The SC-4 was unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show last month by Lord Strathcarron, Mr Macpherson's father. Lord Strathcarron, 75, is president of the Guild of Motoring Writers and head of the Clan Macpherson.

Strathcarron's management includes Martin Miles, a production engineer who sold his own company, Burdon & Miles, to Colin Spooner, formerly technical director at Lotus, and Sue Ball, who was previously financial director of Bolton Wanderers Football Club.

Power failure

POOR OLD Battersea Power Station is up for sale – again. Plans by the present owners, Parkview International, for a cinema, theatre and hotel complex seem to be coming apart, and the Hong Kong group has hoisted the "for sale" sign over the 30-acre site.

The famous building on the Thames has had a sad history since the Central Electricity Generating Board stopped burning coal there in 1983. Developer John Broome bought

End of the line

THE PLANNING director from London Transport who presided over the building of the Jubilee

Line extension, the Docklands Light Railway and Croydon's tram network is retiring after working over 30 years on the capital's infrastructure.

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(F) - final (I) - interim *Special Dividend 50p						

Source: Moneyfacts

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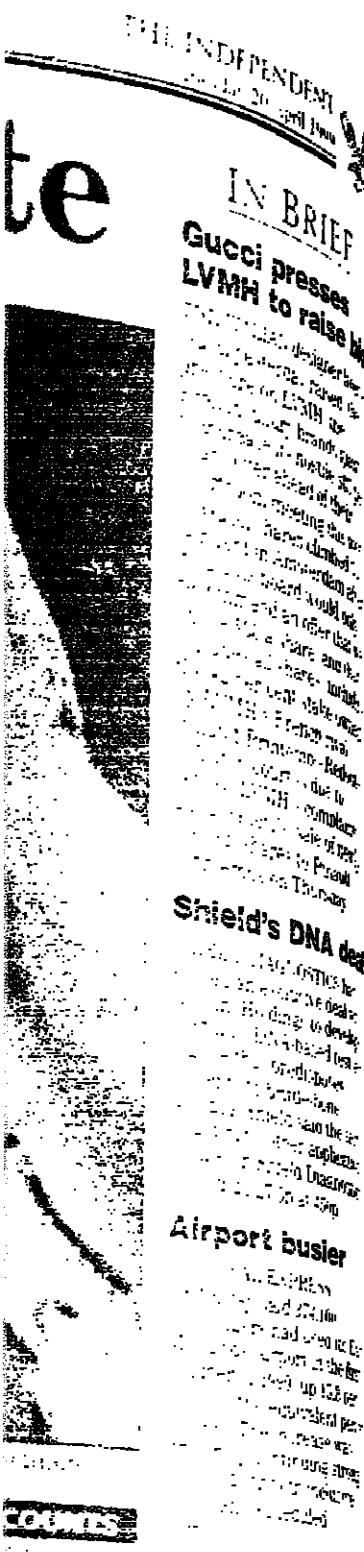
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Bloomsbury £89	Gatwick



Why merge these telecoms monsters?



OUTLOOK

WE'RE ALL for the spirit of European integration in *The Independent*, but for Deutsche Telekom to merge with Telecom Italia is surely taking the process too far. The Italian government, which retains a golden share in Telecom Italia, would be crazy to allow it to take place.

Both these companies maintain an iron grip on their own domestic markets; when it comes to monopoly, they make our own British Telecom seem like an also-ran. Deutsche even has a cable network stretching to some 20 million households on top of its ordinary telephone monopoly. By any standards, this would be a monstrously anti-competitive alliance.

From a shareholder value perspective too, it is hard to see how this deal can benefit either party. Both of them are hopelessly inefficient, fat and lazy by world class benchmarks in this industry. Despite its publicly listed status, Telecom Italia is still essentially a branch of government bureaucracy and Deutsche Telekom isn't much better.

Jumping into bed together is hardly going to help address these

deeply rooted business inefficiencies; indeed it might even reinforce them. Much better placed to modernise Telecom Italia would be our own British Telecom. With 10 years more experience of liberalised telecoms markets under its belt than its European peers, BT has already managed to transform itself from government monopoly into efficiently run business.

Yet even BT has balked at the idea of taking on Telecom Italia. If BT thinks it would have problems, what chance Deutsche?

In the end, this mooted merger may founder on Italian pride. The Italian Government says it would contemplate only an equal partnership, but is it really possible to forge a merger of equals when one company is so much bigger than the other? Shareholders and customers of both companies ought to pray that it is not.

Spanish prices

THE LIMITATIONS of Euroland's one-size-fits-all interest rate policy are being tested early. When the single currency was on the drawing board, few people foresaw that it would be Germany, the Continent's powerhouse, that would be flagging while the peripheral countries enjoyed robust growth.

The recent half-point interest rate cut by the European Central Bank was essentially a response to weak growth at the core at a time when economic indicators for the smaller countries in the euro-11 pointed to no change in policy. Wim

Duisenberg, president of the ECB, indicated again yesterday that he was worried about the inflationary impact of the weak euro, and would not be in a hurry to reduce interest rates again.

Little wonder then that the Spanish government has decided to tackle head-on its higher-than-average inflation rate (at 2.2 per cent compared to the 0.8 per cent average). It has announced a package of measures to reduce charges by the gas, electricity and telephone companies, and cut motorway tolls and prescription charges. The measures are intended to slice 0.2-0.3 points directly off consumer prices this year.

Reductions in directly administered prices have helped trim the UK inflation rate over the years too, and are not to be sneezed at, even though the long-term consequences of putting more money into consumers' pockets are themselves sometimes inflationary. Spain is also, sensibly, boosting competition in the utilities markets.

All the same, the constraints imposed on policy by a single currency and single interest rate could scarcely be clearer. This is certainly the conclusion John Townsend, the Bank of England director responsible for euro matters, drew yesterday when he said Britain needed rates at roughly twice European levels. It was right for the UK not to have joined in the first wave, he said, given the divergence between the British and Continental economies.

If this argument is taken too far, however, Britain never will join, and most of the existing members should not have either. The lesson of the Spanish measures is that governments can still use taxes and other policies to tackle inflationary pressures. If the British economy is as flexible as we like to think, it is hard to see a move to lower Euro-style interest rates as such a terrible threat.

Kingfisher/Asda

HAVING HAD a weekend to sleep on it and now with a formal statement to feed upon, the logic of Kingfisher's £18bn tie-up with Asda remains as

sweeping all before it, what will the picture look like two or three years out?

For Kingfisher this deal looks more and more like an anti-Wal-Mart invasion device. It was only a few years ago that Kingfisher started rolling out the huge B&Q Warehouse format when rumours were rife of the American Home Depot chain coming to these shores. The creation of a Woolies-Asda behemoth looks like similar thinking.

There is also the quest for scale for its own sake. Never underestimate management ego in this regard. This deal would enable Sir Geoff Mulcahy to stride the global stage as one of the world's top 10 retailers. Perhaps that is the biggest motivation of all.

In the City, there is still some hope that Asda will attract a higher offer, perhaps from Wal-Mart itself, or at least that Kingfisher might be press-ganged into raising its bid. Investors would be unwise to count on it. This is a poor deal, and it is not going to be improved by upping the terms of the share swap offer.

Spain cuts utility prices to fight inflation

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

THE SPANISH government has announced wide-ranging cuts in utility prices in an attempt to choke off domestic inflation, which is running well ahead of the European average.

The government has claimed that the cuts in gas, electricity and telephone prices will knock 0.2-0.3 per cent off the country's inflation rate, which spiked up from 1.8 per cent in February to 2.2 per cent last month. That is well above the average euro zone inflation rate of 0.8 per cent.

It is the first move by a European government to get round the one-size-fits-all interest rate policy for the euro area since the 10 euro countries gave up power to set their own interest rates at the start of the year.

The price cuts, which range from 1.5 per cent for electricity to as much as 10 per cent for some telephone charges, have been broadly welcomed by economists. But the fact that the burden has fallen heavily on the corporate sector - most of Spain's utilities are publicly quoted - has upset stock market investors.

Analysts said that the deci-

Inchcape to return £530m to investors

BY AMY FREZZELL

SHARES IN First Choice Holidays rose sharply yesterday on speculation that Airtours might muscle in on its planned merger with Knorr by launching a £750m hostile bid for the company.

First Choice shares closed 14.5p higher at 190p despite an attempt by the company's chief executive Ian Clubb, to warn Airtours off.

Just a day after he said an Airtours bid would be a "reckless gamble", Thomson Travel said it would not stand on the sidelines if a bid battle developed. A successful bid by Airtours for First Choice would wrench the market leader position away from Thomson in the UK market, a position it guards jealously.

"We have been market leader in the UK for 25 years and we have no intention of losing that position," Thomson said.

Industry figures compiled by AC Nielsen show that Thomson had a 28 per cent share for package holidays in the summer 1998 season to October. That compared with 19 percent for Airtours and 15 percent each for Thomas Cook and First Choice.

Critics of the First Choice-Knorr deal have argued that it does not solve First Choice's weakness of lacking its own chain of high street travel agents. Airtours would be able to add its Going Places chain and wring out additional cost savings.

Airtours declined to comment. Its shares edged 10.5p lower to 488.5p.

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SPORT

Cricket: Nottinghamshire count on the inspirational qualities of an old favourite to restore the glory



The Nottinghamshire director of cricket, Clive Rice (right), renews old acquaintances with his Middlesex counterpart, Mike Gatting, at a pre-season friendly at Southgate

Wilkinson doubt puts Newcastle on alert

RUGBY UNION

By DAVID LLEWELLYN

NEWCASTLE FACE the possibility of having to blood a rookie outside-half in their Allied Dunbar Premiership match against Richmond at Kingston Park tomorrow night.

The Falcons' crisis at No 10, which began when Rob Andrew suffered a dislocated shoulder at Wasps on Sunday, ruling him out for the rest of the season, deepened yesterday with the news that Jonny Wilkinson was having treatment on a twisted ankle.

The England centre is rated as only 50-50 for tomorrow's game, so Newcastle have put the England Under 21 fly-half David Walder on stand-by. Walder, a local product, has played just one first XV game in the Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup. If called upon to play, he would find Richmond a far different prospect.

Wilkinson was remaining optimistic about his chances of playing in his preferred position, one in which the England coach, Clive Woodward, has been reluctant to select him because of his lack of experience at club level. However, the timing of Wilkinson's move inside, if he does play, could have been better.

Wilkinson said: "I want to play at No 10, but not under these circumstances. I've enjoyed being outside Rob. This match against Richmond is going to be a massive challenge for us so soon after the Wasps game, particularly as I will be playing somewhere I haven't for a long time. But this team is very good when we have our backs to the wall."

There are also worries for the Tynesiders over Val'a Tuigamala, who has a bruised thigh, but Tony Underwood is making a good recovery from a dead leg. Both players were injured against Wasps.

Richmond, like Newcastle, are pushing for one of six European spots in the Premiership, but realistically two have already gone to the first and second, Leicester and Northampton respectively. The London side have games in hand but a lot still to do. They were boosted yesterday by the news that their Argentine scrum-half Agustin Pichot is back after turning out against a World XV in Buenos Aires at the weekend.

The debate about whether the Saracens prop, Roberto Grau, used his head illegally against the Leicester centre Craig Joiner has still not been settled. The Leicester manager, Dean Richards, said last night: "I've looked at the video and it is unclear what happened. We have another video and I am going to look at it tomorrow."

"If I am satisfied that something has gone on then my first thoughts would be to find out what Saracens are going to do about it. I will be consulting with Mark Evans (the Saracens director of rugby) and then obviously we will make a decision. I have spoken to Craig Joiner and, the thing is, he did not receive an injury; therefore he does not want to make a meal out of it."

Richards also revealed that he is studying another clip, or should that be footage, of an incident in which the Tigers No 8 Martin Corry appeared to be trodden on by a Saracens player and suffered a cut on the bridge of his nose. "It seems to have been accidental," said Richards, but he intends to have a chat with Evans about that one as well.

Meanwhile the Saracens coach, Francois Pienaar, says he believes the Rugby Football Union should change its rules to allow clubs to cite players who have already been dealt with by the referee. "If the referee books or warns a player for one thing when they actually did something else," explained Pienaar, "then we should able to cite that player."

Hard labour on the Rice fields

BY JON CULLEY

THE FIRST requirement for anyone meeting Clive Rice is a head for heights. To reach his office at Trent Bridge, you must first climb to the upper level of the two-tier Bridgford Road stand and then - pausing only to exchange glances with top-deck passengers on a passing bus - scale an open metal staircase leading to what might be best described as a portable office on stilts. It is a terrific spot, so far as Rice is concerned: from there he can monitor his players' every move.

From the ground it might not appear quite so perfect. Positioned right next to the pavilion, it is an eerie that can scarcely be missed as players head for the dressing rooms, and the occupant can expect to be more readily likened to a vulture than an eagle. For sure, should Nottinghamshire's season deliver more of the diminishing returns of the last few, then departing batsmen or vanquished bowlers will not care to look upwards as they pass. The moustachioed man with the baseball cap covering his balding dome is unlikely to be greeting them with a cheery wave.

Around these parts, of course, Clive Rice is synonymous with success. Under his captaincy, Nottinghamshire won their first Championship for 52 years in 1981 and coupled it with the NatWest Trophy six years later in a double-

wining year. Even when he left, successful habits continued, yielding more silverware in 1989 (Benson and Hedges Cup) and 1991 (Sunday League).

The last few summers, however, have been less bright. As a Test match ground, graced by the magnificent new Radcliffe Road stand, Trent Bridge has blossomed. Not so the team. In the Championship, the county's four-year record reads 11th, 17th, 15th, 16th. Which is why despite previous rebuttals, Nottinghamshire felt moved last autumn, with the prospect of two divisions looming, to say farewell to Alan Ormond and fax the Rice home in Johannesburg with an offer to become director of cricket too good to refuse.

Hence he sits in his eerie, his desk containing a three-year contract worth giving up his position as head of South Africa's cricket academy for plotting Nottinghamshire's return to championship glory, starting at Leicester today. Only Tim Robinson, Paul Johnson and Kevin Evans remain from Rice's days as a player but, somehow, the remainder of the squad have had no need for them to

recount tales of the taskmaster who drove them to unimagined heights; they know already they are in for a tough season.

Rice will be 50 this summer and last autumn had a four centimetre tumour, thankfully benign, removed from behind his left ear. "I woke up with a hell of a headache," he said.

"Think of all the alcohol you have ever consumed in your life and you might have an idea of what it was like. I lost the hearing in my left ear but it was a price worth paying."

'People who do not want to play can leave. People who say things like "I'm tired" can leave. That's how I see it from here'

None the less, he has not melted much. Even before he had set eyes on the players who would become his charges, he made it clear what he would expect. "People who do not want to play can leave," he said. "People who say things like 'I'm tired', we play too much cricket nowadays can leave. That's how I see it from here."

From his new perspective, nothing appears any different. "If someone does not want to give 100 per cent, I don't want to know his troubles," he said. "When I was running

scorecards any day and you will see lots of 50s, 80s and 90s. But if he gets 160 I will say well done."

"I've set every player a personal goal and challenged him to do better. I remember when Chris Broad joined us as a player, I set him a target that was 10 per cent better than anything he had achieved. He has since told me just how much that meant for him because within six weeks of coming here he was in the England side."

"I want to achieve the success I had as a player and reproduce it

here, to get back into the side the passion for playing and playing to win. The players might not end up liking me but they will like winning and they will like the self-fulfilment."

In between quaking in their boots, however, the current crop of Trent Bridge under-achievers can take some heart: Rice at least thinks the bunch he took over the '70s were worse. "Then the only thing that really mattered to the players was to finish one point ahead of Derbyshire, who were just as poor," he said.

"Today the raw material is a lot more promising. It has saddened me to see the county falling away but these things go in cycles. You build a team up and that team will play and win for a few years but then start to tail off. The wheel has turned and they are at the bottom again but there is a nucleus there and they can come through and build it back up."

"The key thing is self-belief. You've all got talent but it is who believes in themselves that matters. I have been pleasantly surprised by their attitude. They are a decent bunch of guys as well. But they have doubted their ability and a result gone downhill. It is how we can make them believe in what they can do that is the key."

To that end, in part, he has signed, in place of Paul Strang as the over-

seas player, the one-time Sussex all-rounder Vassbert Drakes, an inspirational and talented West Indian based in South Africa whose non-participation in the Red Stripe Cup precludes his selection for the West Indies team.

"He is probably the best player not going to the World Cup," Rice said. "At Border his contribution to the team has been fantastic, especially to the younger bowlers. If he can do that here he will be a great asset."

There will be a role, too, for the likes of Broad, Graham Dilley and even Richard Hadlee, his partner in the glory days, who has agreed to mix a summer of speaking engagements with bowling 'master classes' at Trent Bridge. "Cricket's great irony," Rice said, "is that just at the moment a player finally works out what the game is all about it is time for him to retire. But these are guys who know what they were trying to do and can pass that knowledge on."

Whether that knowledge empowers today's players to reproduce Rice's own success he cannot forecast. But he wants each player to at least fulfil his potential. "How quickly that happens depends upon individual attitudes," he said. "But if this team is capable of success I would expect them to get there in three to five years."

Jenkins a necessity for the form-book Lions



ALAN WATKINS

RUGBY HAS developed so quickly in the past few years, not always in the most admirable directions, that the old fireside game of picking best-ever sides has become largely pointless. Indeed, I doubt whether even a Lions side of 1970-75 could in strength and fitness live with their counterparts today. What we can do, however, is select those counterparts. Whether there ever will be another Lions tour is a different question, even though a tour is selected.

Players who have not participated in the Five Nations this season are discounted, which leaves us without Allan Bateman, Will Greenwood and Jamie Mayer. Past performances are taken into account too, notably of those who participated in the last,

Matt Dawson, Scott Gibbs and others; he won the series. But he does not like playing there. He informed the Welsh selectors accordingly. In the last four months he has had an outstanding season both as a kicker and, more surprisingly to his numerous detractors, as a playmaker.

Equally, there is no doubt that the outstanding outside half - perhaps the outstanding back - of the season was Gregor Townsend. He also is fussy. He does not like playing at outside centre, where he has sometimes been put.

I insist on including Jenkins for his kicking. Nor do I think Jonny Wilkinson an adequate substitute, partly because he is not quite so reliable a kicker, partly because playing him at inside centre, his current England position, would

eliminate either Gibbs or John Leslie from the side.

My solution is to leave Jenkins where he is and play Townsend at full-back. From here he has transformed international matches when he comes on as a substitute. He is certainly more than fast enough for a position which has, since the days of Andy Irvine, JPR Williams and Serge Blanco, become the most glamorous on the field. I can only hope he agrees with me and does not do a Jenkins.

As Jenkins' partner I am going for Gary Armstrong, who has had a fine, scrapping season. It is worth remarking that he, Townsend, Leslie and Alan Tait enjoyed the success they did because of accident brought about by the injuries to Bryan Redpath and Duncan Hodge.

In the absence of Bateman and the waning of Guscott, Tait is the natural choice at outside centre. Inside centre is more difficult because Leslie rivalled Townsend and maybe Tait also as hooker and lock. None the less, I choose Gibbs both because of his tackling and because of his try against England, which the great Bledyn Williams would have been proud of.

The only wing and, indeed, the only England back who forces himself into the side is Dan Luger. With Wayne Proctor discarded, Nigel Walker retired and Demis Hickie confined to the television studios, sheer speed is in marked short supply. Justin Bishop promised much, delivered little; Steve Hanley scored a try in his first international but broke his wrist. I am choosing Kenny Logan

for his strength and enthusiasm rather than for his erratic kicking, which could and should have won the match against England and given Scotland a Grand Slam.

Locks, in contrast to wing, have been luxuriating. The unsung hero of the Welsh win at Wembley was Chris Wyatt. Alas, such is the press of competition that he does not make either the Test pairing (Martin Johnson and Scott Murray) or the touring party.

The best No 8 was Lawrence Dallaglio, a position he settled down in after oscillating, in the same matches, with Richard Hill at No 8. It is in the later position that I am choosing him and giving the No 8 jersey to Scott Quinnell. This is not wholly justified by Quinnell's form. But he remains a player who, on his day, can inspire

colleagues and win matches. The outstanding No 7 was unarguably Martin Leslie.

The Test XV are: G Townsend; D Luger; A Tait; S Gibbs; K Logan; N Jenkins; G Armstrong; T Smith; K Wood; P Wallace; M Johnson; S Murray; L Dallaglio; S Quinnell; M Leslie.

To make up a party of 35 - a luxury justifiably claimed by the manager, Fran Cotton, in South Africa - we are taking an extra player at outside-half, scrum-half, hooker and lock, and in the back row.

The rest of the party are: S Howarth; J Bishop; J Guscott; J Leslie; S Hanley; J Wilkinson; A Thomas; R Howley; K Bracken; J Leonard; R Cockerill; G Jenkins; D Garforth; C Quinnell; J David; T Rodger; C Charvis; E Peters; R Hill; N Back.

Bobbyjo to follow legends

A LITTLE BIT of enchantment twinkles into life at Sandown on Saturday in the shape of the best mixed meeting of the year.

You attend Esher this weekend it will be a little like carrying your own real life remote control. It will be possible to switch between the best of both the turf's codes, the chance to see a jumping horse that will forge itself into the National Hunt consciousness or a potential Derby winner.

The names spawned by this card provide chunky chapters in racing folklore. Sandown was founded in 1875 and its very first meeting was mixed. It now represents the changing of the seasons out with the old jumpers and in with the new, aspiring Flat horses. And some of the sleek young things have been mighty fledglings indeed.

The Classic Trial was a quite magical guideline for one period of eight years. In that time Troy (1979), Henbit (1980), Shergar (1981) and Shahrastani (1986) went on to win the Derby. It was no tributary two years ago either when Benby The Dip and Silver Patriarch filled second and third places behind Voyager's Quest before duelling gloriously at Epsom.

Sandown is probably the least conservative of Britain's tracks. This may explain why it has been voted the leading course for the last five years.

The Eclipse Stakes, which was named after the greatest horse of his time, was first run in 1886 and was England's first £10,000 race. In addition, Sandown pioneered televised racing. In 1939 the BBC suggested

By RICHARD EDMONDSON

they should screen the Eclipse and offered a facility fee of £15.

This did not appeal. But, in the 1947-48 season, two chases and a hurdle race were televised.

In 1957 though came the big one. The Whitbread Gold Cup, a handicap chase, became Britain's first sponsored horse-race. Traditionalists were sent spinning in their mausoleums.

The contest, which gets its 43rd airing on Saturday, has become a contest of screaming excitement. There are several

and the only horse to win it three times. Last to challenge to the best reception I've ever heard at a National Hunt course. He was the king of England, so proud."

The Duke may be proud himself again this weekend when he has Go Ballistic and Baronet in the big race. A field of 22 was declared yesterday on that is currently good, with good to firm patches. The one they might have to beat though is Bobbyjo, the Grand National winner who can collect a £50,000 bonus if he can take this challenge contest as well.

Bobbyjo is attempting to emulate the 1990 winner, Mr Frisk, who is the only horse to complete the double in the same season. "He's in very good form and the National hasn't taken very much out of him," Tommy Carberry, his trainer, said yesterday.

Mill House was ridden in his 1967 victory year by David Nicholson, who, last season, joined Stan Mellor and Josh Gifford as jockeys and trainers to win the Whitbread after the success of Call It A Day.

The Duke partied that night and he has not exactly put himself in a hermitage since. But, the recollection of Mill House remains vivid. "I'll never forget that day," he said yesterday. "I'd ridden Mill House in the Gold Cup and Fulke Walwyn had done a tremendous job to get and three stones to his six rivals. He dragged a safe round behind him and still won."

Mill House was ridden in his 1967 victory year by David Nicholson, who, last season, joined Stan Mellor and Josh Gifford as jockeys and trainers to win the Whitbread after the success of Call It A Day.

Saturday's card however is destined to take a lot out of all that watch. It's that sort of day.

Williamson just avoids prison

NORMAN WILLIAMSON was told by magistrates yesterday that he had avoided going to prison by a whisker when he was sentenced for drink-driving.

A court in Gloucester sentenced the jockey to 100 hours' community service and banned him from driving for three years after he admitted driving at more than three times the legal limit.

The chairman of the bench, Clive Thomson said: "You have only just missed custody by a



Bobbyjo attempts to follow up his Grand National win

whisker and you must be certain when you get your licence back it doesn't happen again."

Williamson was stopped by police on the A417 near Gloucester on Valentine's Day. The court heard he had been drinking in a pub near his house after missing out on riding Decoupage to victory in the Tote Gold Trophy at Newbury the previous day due to injury.

Mr Leach, defending, said that Williamson had not intended to drive but returned

home to find a message from the trainer Venetia Williams asking him to ride out at her Herefordshire stables early the next morning.

He decided to make the 90-mile journey to Herefordshire in his luxury Lexus car but was stopped at the junction.

Mr Leach told the court that Williamson had no previous convictions for drink-driving and produced a letter to the

magistrates from Williams testifying to his good character.

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TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • PLUS THE INFORMATION DAILY



It was not news to his constituents in Hartlepool or his colleagues in Westminster. So when Matthew Parris was provoked by Jeremy Paxman to 'out' Peter Mandelson on TV, he could have let the whole affair blow over. But, as this exclusive extract from Donald Macintyre's biography reveals, this underestimates the ferocity with which the man guards his personal relationships and his private life

The truth was 'out'. And so were the knives

Peter Mandelson actually saw himself being outed on *Newsnight* on the evening of 27 October. He was reclining on his bed at Northumberland Place, going through a red box with the television set on, as Matthew Parris, *The Times* sketch writer, ex-MP and openly gay, was interviewed by Jeremy Paxman about the personal crisis that had caused Ron Davies to resign as Welsh Secretary that very day. Matthew Parris told Paxman: "There are at least two gay members of the Cabinet." Paxman, appearing to search his memory for whom Parris might mean, asked: "Are there two gay members of the Cabinet?" Parris replied: "Well, Chris Smith is openly gay and I think Peter Mandelson is certainly gay." At which point Paxman, looking a touch flustered, said: "I think we will just move on from there. I'm not quite sure where he is on that."

Remarkably, Mandelson was to say later that at first he simply returned to his box and carried on working. This had happened several times before, after all. But by the time Benjamin Wegg-Presser arrived 20 minutes later from a nearby restaurant, his paper was filling up with messages from the newsdesks of every national newspaper. It was an old story, but Mandelson was now a cabinet minister, and the man doing the outing was famous in his own right.

Someone less single-mindedly determined to protect his privacy might have given up at that point. It was widely known in Hartlepool, as well as throughout the Westminster village, that Mandelson was gay. Indeed, he had never made any attempt to conceal it from those who knew him. Would it not be a relief to let the tidal wave of publicity roll over him? This was, after all, the Nineties, not the Fifties. But that was not how Mandelson saw it. At around 10am Wegg-Presser took the first of many calls from a senior BBC executive, Richard Clemmow. Could he speak to Mandelson? No, he couldn't. Well, said Clemmow, please pass on to Peter that Paxman was very upset about what had happened and would shortly be biking round a letter of apology. In fact, Paxman delivered the letter himself, making a detour on his way to work at BBC Television Centre to drop it off at Northumberland Place.

Dear Peter, (the letter read), I'm sorry that Matthew Parris mentioned your name on 'Newsnight' last night. In the heat of the moment, he rather caught me out, and I tried to brush over things as soon as possible afterwards.

I fully respect - and share - your view that your private life is your own affair. I am sorry if I have been the cause of your embarrassment. With kind regards, Jeremy Paxman

This fairly unequivocal apology did little to mollify Mandelson. For one thing, he believed, rightly or wrongly, that Paxman - a friend, if not a close one - knew he was gay and who he had been going out with. In any case, before he had even returned home to read the letter Mandelson had already gone straight to the top. He telephoned Sir Christopher Bland, the chairman of the BBC governors, and suggested that he acquaint himself with the facts.

He also - contrary to subsequent denials - telephoned Birt, also to protest. That evening, having returned home and read Paxman's letter, he wrote a reply, unforgiving even by the standard of scores of similar letters he had sent to journalists over the years.



him on until his remarks became indefensible. If I didn't know better, I would think it was all accidental. But I know how thoroughly 'Newsnight' thinks about its output and interviews. And I know what licence it gives itself in translating and demonstrating its pet hates. I have been one of these for too long.

Yours,
Peter

I do not want a correspondence, so please do not bother to reply.



At this point, Paxman, feeling that Mandelson's hint about a *Newsnight* witch hunt was out of order, wrote back a robust but amiable "come off it" sort of letter to tell him so. Paxman's bosses, however, were more respectful. By this time, the Labour MP Diana Abbott, an old sparing partner of Mandelson's, referred at some length to Mandelson's homosexuality on *Question Time*. Sir Christopher, writing to Mandelson the following morning, was contrition itself:

Thank you for your telephone call on Wednesday, arising from the previous night's edition of 'Newsnight'. I have now looked into the matter. It was clearly inappropriate for a studio guest to have taken the opportunity to comment on your private life. I can assure you that neither the programme nor Jeremy Paxman intended this to happen and we very much regret that it did. The fact that a contributor to 'Question Time' repeated the allegation last night compounds our error. I can only apologise sincerely on behalf of the BBC both for the original mistake and for the widespread press coverage that has resulted.

Yours sincerely
Christopher



Brazilian student who is Mandelson's close friend

The 'outing' of Mandelson by Matthew Parris (top) and Jeremy Paxman led to screaming headlines in 'The Sun' and the revelation of the identity of Mandelson's 'close friend' in the 'Sunday Express' (above)

Dear Jeremy,
Thank you for your letter, which frankly I found perfunctory considering what you did to my night and day, with help from Matthew. Journalists at my door, until the early hours, photographers in the garden, and chasing me all day. If you were not looking for a cheap angle for your interview, you behaved very unprofessionally. Anyone could see where Matthew was going in his remarks. You had more than one chance to stop him and head him off, you egged

After an instant poll of 100 constituents, the Hartlepool Mail, under a headline that screamed: WHO CARES IF OUR MP IS GAY?, reported that 94 had decided that it didn't matter. But the national newspapers were not going to be put off. The *Sunday Express* was on the track of Reinaldo Avila da Silva, as Mandelson had learnt in a telephone call from his friend in Tokyo. Avila had been in a steady relationship with Mandelson, frequently staying at Northumberland Place, from March until he went to Tokyo to study Japanese in the autumn. The *Sunday Express* did not know this. But they knew enough to consider it worthwhile sending the reporter John Chapman - by coincidence the very same journalist who had "exposed" Mandelson's relationship with Peter Ashby 11 years earlier, in the middle of the 1987 election - to Tokyo to talk to him.

What happened next was disputed. Amanda Platell, now director of communications at Conservative Central Office, was moved from the editorship of the paper in January. A senior Express executive vehemently denied that Mandelson had made any request for her sacking, and is adamant that Platell had anyway been moved because the *Sunday Express* had failed to fulfil management hopes for the newspaper. It was true that her case was not helped when an internal investigation following the publication of the story established that the pictures of the Brazilian had been taken against his will. Moreover, the internal enquiry found that the shots of Avila with his hand in front of his face had all been expunged from the paper's computer system. But there is no evidence to support the common assumption that Platell's head was somehow handed to Mandelson on a platter - well after he had resigned.



The morning after the 'Newsnight' before, Mandelson leaves his home

Michael Crabtree

Kosovo children appeal to Independent readers

Thousands of Kosovar refugee children now face death from hunger, cold and disease. Many are in deep shock. Many have witnessed their parents and relatives killed in the awful atrocities from which they fled. Albania, the poorest country in Europe, cannot support this massive influx of refugees.

Your action will save children who have lost everything

The European Children's Trust needs your swift response to expand our emergency centre in northern Albania to help thousands of refugees. Our team has been working with displaced Kosovo families since this tragedy began. We are ready to provide food, medical aid and clothing to the confused and frightened children who arrive daily.

These are children and families whose homes have been lost, perhaps forever.

Special help is needed for the traumatised children who have witnessed terrible crimes, and must now start to live a normal life.

• £30 could buy emergency medicine and food for 5 Kosovar refugee children for a week.

Kosovo Emergency Appeal. The European Children's Trust. FREEPOST KER359, 646 Queen Street, London, EC4B 4AR.

Please send what you can to save the displaced Kosovar children. Call 0800 056 3686 now or cut the coupon below

I enclose £130 (my choice £_____) to save Kosovar children. (Cheques to The European Children's Trust please). Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card:

Card no. _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

Address _____ Postcode _____

Telephone no. _____

Please return to: Don McCready, (116), The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KER359, 646 Queen Street, London, EC4B 4AR.

Or call 0800 056 3686 NOW.

Please act NOW - your gift will save lives



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MEDIA

Kosovo: cutting through the cant

Sir: I have been consistently impressed by the standard of Robert Fisk's reporting of the Kosovo hostilities and conscious that he is a war reporter of the highest calibre.

His front-page article of 17 April moved me to anger and to tears. It also demonstrated Mr Fisk's integrity and humanity. I have never read a more powerful report.

Amidst all the fudging, half-truths, misinformation, evasions, pretence and outright lies, Robert Fisk has consistently shone the spotlight of reality. This latest report should make those who are trying to cover up the truth squirm. Hopefully, some of the bereaved and injured will now be able to tell what really happened.

Ms VAL PARGETER
Stourbridge,
West Midlands

Sir: Robert Fisk appears unwilling to distinguish between the savage slaughter deliberately inflicted by the Serbs and the accidental suffering caused by Nato. He contents himself with perfunctory mention of Serb atrocities while dwelling in great and grisly detail on victims of unintended Nato action. Did I imagine it was his penultimate paragraph in Saturday's contribution implying, however faintly, that a Nato pilot might have killed civilians on purpose?

Fisk might argue that (a) he doesn't get to see Serb atrocities and (b) he is under tight censorship. But other Western correspondents in Serbia do a far more balanced job. So why is Fisk allowed full rein? I believe his writing (I won't call it reporting) is a disgrace to himself and to *The Independent*.

PATRICK MASSEY
Orpington, Kent

Sir: To give the whole of your front page on Saturday to Robert Fisk was inspired. With his observer's eye and total clarity and honesty he cuts through the cant and hypocrisy of every situation he surveys.

Thank God for Robert Fisk. In him we have one of the truly great independent journalists and reporters of history who restores real honour and pride to the all too often bland and superficial "free press".

CHARLES HARVEY
SUZI HARVEY
Frome,
Somerset

Sir: War is bad enough but I feel I can take no more heart-on-sleeve melodrama from Robert Fisk with his irritating picture-by-lined "reports" from Belgrade.

He led the paper on Friday (16 April) with his "horror story" from the roadside where lay the bodies of those killed by bombs from a Nato aircraft. This, as Nato has admitted, was a dreadful accident and not, as Fisk contends, an atrocity.

Rape and the whole grisly business of ethnic cleansing, these are atrocities and they are perpetrated by Serbs on the ground, not by Nato from the air.

All war is terrible. Every death is a tragedy. Fisk's award-winning descriptive writing makes great play with his emotive detail. He cannot resist the poetry. But a corpse with no head is still a man killed in an avoidable accident. He is no more and no less dead than a child killed in a road accident and the tragedy for the bereaved is neither more nor less.

STEWART KNOWLES
Fleet, Hampshire

Sir: One can only say, after reading Robert Fisk's report from Kosovo which you carry on the front page (17 April), that you are now without question the finest newspaper in Britain.

And Robert Fisk's piece will deservedly pass into the history of the very best and bravest of reports on war and its realities. May we hope that it will be shown



Bullfighting School No 2: boys practise the right way to handle their capes in the Plaza de Toros El Batán, on the outskirts of Madrid David Rose

to school-children and students in the future as a record of the madness that still afflicted the human race as late as the closing weeks of the 20th century?

IAN FLINTOFF
London SW6

Sir: Has *The Independent* abandoned being a newspaper to become an outlet for anti-Nato prejudice? Your 17 April front page is a disgrace.

As a subjective, unbalanced piece of polemic Robert Fisk's article might have a place in the Review section. But objective, analytical news reporting it absolutely is not.

The convoy bombing accident was utterly tragic. But such accidents are almost inevitable in any war, even one as "just" as that which Nato is pursuing. By contrast the evil violence Serbia is pursuing is far from accidental; it is planned, deliberate. Robert Fisk seems unable to make the distinction.

P MITCHELL
London SW19

How the war began

Sir: Hugh Gleaves's tirade against "fascist" Croatia (letter, 16 April) requires a reply: it perpetuates myths manipulated by Belgrade's propaganda machine which have done so much to prolong this war.

The war did not begin with

Nato's present campaign. It began more than a decade ago precisely in Kosovo, when Milosevic manipulated Serb nationalism to climb to power in Belgrade and crush Kosovar autonomy. That initiated the break-up of Yugoslavia, for none of the other nationalities in it was willing to become subject to Greater Serbia.

Milosevic was unable to crush Slovenia because there was no Serb minority there whose fears he could manipulate and which he could use as a fifth column. The situation was different in Croatia, where there was a substantial Serb minority, comprising a majority in the Krajina region.

After their rebellion there the Serb leadership had the Croats expelled en masse. This was when ethnic cleansing began: not as a matter of undisciplined atrocities or spontaneous anarchy but an organised instrument of state policy.

When, after the massacre in Srebrenica in 1995, it became clear that Milosevic could not control his own killing machine, the United States, unwilling to do the job itself, gave the green light to Croatia to reoccupy Krajina. The Serb leadership decamped in a matter of hours, long before the Croatian army could reach them, instructing their population to follow after them, which they in their overwhelming majority proceeded to do – remembering perhaps what they had done or had been done in their name to their former Croat neighbours.

Four years further on Milosevic still retains power by manipulating the assemblage of myths and fears, hopes and hatreds which makes up Serb nationalism, and ethnic cleansing remains his instrument of state policy. So long as this remains the case there will be no peace in that part of Europe, either for the Serbs or for their neighbours.

BRUCE YOUNG
Philosophy Division
University of Wolverhampton
Dudley

End it now

Sir: What is going on here? Nato started this war with three worthy aims: ensuring the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia in order to avoid the certainty of a wider Balkan conflagration should the KLA's goal of independence for Kosovo be achieved; restoring a degree of autonomy to Kosovo, to diminish support for the independence movement; and preventing the flight of refugees that would result from Serbia's prosecution of the war with the KLA.

Unfortunately but predictably, the Nato bombing campaign

unleashed the Serbs to pursue all-out war with the KLA and triggered what is arguably the worst humanitarian crisis in post-war Europe.

The original goals have now been forgotten, and self-preservation and an affirmation of Nato's relevance in the post Cold War era have taken over. A ground victory must be achieved. The KLA has become the instrument of that victory, and Nato has become what it always protested it would not – the KLA air force.

A KLA victory in Kosovo will plunge the Balkans into decades of violence, making the flood of suffering humanity of today seem like a mere trickle. The US will wash its hands of it, and Europe will be left alone to bear the consequences.

This must end before it is too late. We have to stop the bombing and negotiate an equitable solution with the Yugoslavs, now.

MARK S K TUROWICZ
New Delhi

BBC charges in

Sir: Contrary to your accusation that I am "leading the charge" against the BBC's coverage of the Balkan war (leading article, 17 April), I think it has been exemplary.

I made two specific and limited criticisms. The first was of the initial shortage of health warnings on reports from Belgrade.

Listeners and viewers must be reminded of the restrictions under which journalists there operate, in particular their lack of access to Kosovo, which means Serb actions go unreported. The BBC soon

replied to this criticism.

My second criticism was of

senior BBC correspondents

writing regular newspaper

columns. This was prompted by

John Simpson's *Sunday Telegraph*

piece in the first week of the

conflict headlined "Why this war

isn't working".

The BBC has traditionally

barred its correspondents from

writing opinionated pieces for the

newspapers, because it damages

their impartiality and credibility in

the job the licence fee pays

them to do for the BBC. That policy

was good for the BBC and the

interests of independent public

service journalism. If it has

changed, we should be told.

BEN BRADSHAW MP

(Exeter, Lab)

House of Commons

The writer is a former BBC

correspondent

newspapers, because it damages their impartiality and credibility in the job the licence fee pays them to do for the BBC. That policy was good for the BBC and the interests of independent public service journalism. If it has changed, we should be told.

BEN BRADSHAW MP

(Exeter, Lab)

House of Commons

The writer is a former BBC

correspondent

Written off

Sir: If Boyd Tonkin considers that the "silence" of British writers over the Kosovar war is "more deafening than bombs over Belgrade" (*A Week in Books*, 17 April), perhaps he should have his ears examined.

Writers as a class are no more compelled to respond instantly and in public to events than, say, chiropodists, who are on the whole a more homogeneous group. And to compare the writer unfavourably with the journalist, whose job precisely is to provide short-order comment, is completely misguided.

Even if writers actively concerned with war and peace have been sitting on their hands over Kosovo, it may be less to avoid bringing them than to think. Tolstoy's novel was not the fruit of a sleepless night followed by a couple of days' scribbling.

ROBIN BLAKE

London EC1

Role for Russia

Sir: At a time when Nato is, indeed, "over-dependent on coercion to bring this war to an early conclusion" (Lawrence Freedman, 14 April), it is never too late to focus again on diplomatic avenues.

Russia is in a unique position to bring its influence to bear on Mr Milosevic, a fact acknowledged by the Nato Secretary General, Javier Solana, who, along with Robin Cook and others, has called for Russia to be drawn into efforts to find a solution to the Kosovo crisis.

ALEX McLAREN

London SE3

The appointment of the former Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin as President Yeltsin's "special representative on the settlement of the situation around Yugoslavia", gives a new impetus to the political process.

Yours editorial of 13 April was correct to mention one essential precondition, namely that

"Western governments must announce that the external borders of Yugoslavia are not in question." Maybe then, all this talk of a ground force invasion to set up a Nato protectorate can be put to one side and real pressure applied to Belgrade to compromise.

PAUL COLSTON

Russian Information Agency

Novosibirsk

London SW7

Ethically clean?

Sir: The best wars have good names and it is time the latest Balkan affair was given one. As Nato is fighting ethnic cleansing for purely ethical reasons, why not dub it "The First Ethical Cleansing War"?

I suggest "First" because, now that our leaders are becoming ever more conspicuously ethical in their personal habits as well as political practices, the need for ethical wars is bound to increase.

The third millennium could well be littered with ethical cleansing wars, titled "Second", "Third", "Fourth" and so on, until someone finally miscalculates and we blunder into the One and Only Nuclear War.

S L TURNER

Cambridge

Faraway country

Sir: How many Serbs or Albanians do you know? Most of us have never met or had anything to do with these people. Yet we are taking sides in a civil war. Nato is acting like a meddling mother-in-law who interferes with a married couple's private dispute.

ALEX McLAREN

London SE3

Lottery limits

Sir: Last Saturday the National Lottery was won by one ticket again, which is not unusual. The winner gets £2m. Who needs such a large sum? If there was a maximum limit of £2m, the balance could be distributed among those ticket holders with five numbers plus bonus, which this week would have resulted in 12 winning approximately £600,000 each.

PETER SAYERS

Brighton,

East Sussex

Healthy prisons

Sir: Your coverage of the Chief Inspector of Prisons' excellent report on the Wolds Prison concentrated on the Chief Inspector's suggestion that prisoners who have asked to be returned to other prisons because they prefer the more familiar "mutual antipathy" not present at the Wolds (16 April).

If this were true I would be very worried, but it is not. As the governor of the Wolds has confirmed to me, one or two prisoners have asked to leave the Wolds, but not because of any discomfort caused by the excellent staff-prisoner relationships.

I share the Chief Inspector's opinion of Wolds as an outstanding prison. But it would be wrong to believe that its healthy staff-prisoner relationships are unique. Similar conditions prevail in the vast majority of our prisons. Our emphasis on staff mixing with prisoners and supervising them at all times and detaining and controlling them without recourse to armed perimeters makes us a prison service increasingly unique in international terms.

Our outstanding record in recent years in cutting escapes from prisons from 232 in 1993 to 28 last year could not be achieved without the considerable skills of prison officers in managing and influencing prisoners.

MARTIN NAREY
Director-General
HM Prison Service
London SW1

Boys in danger

Sir: Professor Stephen Senn (letter, 16 April) argues that 16-year-old boys, but not girls, need legal protection from seduction by males. He says that, because of boys' relative immaturity, this is not unfair or illogical. To be logical and fair then, should 16-year-old boys not also be protected from seduction by females? Perhaps Professor Senn's efforts to protect immature young men might be better spent campaigning to raise the age at which boys can drive motor vehicles.

Dr P J MCLAUGHLIN
Liverpool

Sir: It is odd that, whilst much has been said both against and for gay sex with 16-year-old males, not a word is being uttered against doctors being allowed to prescribe the Pill to girls under 16 without the knowledge of their parents. Yet, it is a criminal offence to have sex with a girl under that age. To sell alcohol or tobacco to an under-age person is a punishable offence but not, apparently, the Pill.

ALAN J PAGE

Stowmarket,

Suffolk

Artist in oak

Sir: I was interested to see the photograph of the Elfin Oak in Kensington Gardens, (Review, 15 April). It may not be generally known that it was carved in the 1920s by a very talented Cornish artist named Ivor Innes.

He was a friend of my father, who commissioned him to carve another old oak in the garden of Brough House, Rustington, near Littlehampton, Sussex. Complete with fairy wishing well, it gave joy to hundreds of children who came to garden open days in the 1930s.

PETER M ANDSELL

PANDORA

ORANGES ARE not the only fruit... in a plastic case. Pandora, while shopping this week, was surprised to discover a Fresh Cirus Snack - aka an individual orange in plastic packaging (pictured). Lining up with this innovation, known collectively as Fruit on the Move, are plastic-encased grapes, a pear, a banana, a plum, a nectarine and an apple. The imprisoned fruit are incarcerated with a hand-wipe, and are aimed at motorists who need to buy unbruised produce from garage forecourts. Distributors defend the over-protected oranges, also available on Virgin Trains, by pointing at other product packaging.

"In my view there's no difference," said top banana Stephen Penketh from his latex lair within Sara Produce Ltd, "between an orange and an Easter egg."

HOME ALONE. John Travolta left his consort, the lovely Kelly Preston, behind when he took off on a test flight for his millennial party - he plans to race across the planet's time zones on the last day of the century, and has chartered a Boeing 707 for the trip. On board with Travolta for the week-long rehearsal were several fellow flyboys - all emphatically male. A mouthpiece described the jaunt as "a pleasure trip". Oh, and apparently, while mechanics fixed the plane's engine problems in Christchurch, New Zealand, Travolta entertained diners in a local restaurant by impersonating Prince Charles.

TOP MARKS to Philip and Lisa Burgess, the Buckinghamshire couple rescued by a local lifeboat and fisherman after their helicopter crashed off the Dorset coast earlier this month. At Pandora's suggestion, the lucky couple have donated more than £10,000 to their redeemers. Bravo!

IS THERE a spin doctor in the house? The packaged yoghurt product Yakult celebrates the centenary of its inventor Dr Minoru Shirota this summer by sponsoring the Digestive Disorders Foundation's annual conference on "Bowel Bacteria - Friend and Foe."

HUSTLE DOTCOM: Tim Geary hyped his novel *Shouting at the Shipmen into the online bookseller Amazon's hot 100 best-seller list earlier this month by e-mailing all his pals, and synchronising them to buy his book from*

Amazon on the same day. Enquiring minds need to know - exactly how many friends does Geary have?

THE OBSERVER'S science editor Robin McKie has unsheathed his sword of truth against newspapers that irresponsibly over-play GM scare stories. In the new Science and Public Affairs section he savages hysterical hacks who write headlines such as "MP links genetic food to deaths". But what kind of sloppiness would encourage such millennial scaremongering? The week after McKie first wrote the words, the headline "MP links genetic food to 37 deaths" appeared in the *Observer's* feebly-minded sibling *The Guardian*.

CHRIS ISAAC, the rocker, was wavering about letting Stanley Kubrick use his song "Baby Did a Bad Thing" for the trailer of *Eyes Wide Shut*. When studio suits from Warner Brothers pleaded with him after Kubrick's death, Isaac said: "I have just one question. When you're using my music, is there nudity or violence?" The response was a regretful "Both." "OK," Isaac replied. "It's a go."

PANDORA'S TINY Booklet of *Angst* falls open today at the name Alan Duncan. Little Willie's pet rock (Con, Rutland and Melton) helped recruit candidates for his local county council by appealing through the local paper for volunteers to bring the Conservatives back to their former position - on the verge of council control. So potent is the Hague-Duncan wow factor that one person has stepped forward. This gives Rutland Tories potentially as many councillors as the Green Party.

NOW THAT chrome phones are mainstream, this week's hip-trendy must-do (according to Helena Christensen's magazine *Nylon*) is to customise your mobile with nail polish.

PATRICK MOORE lost his head at the Planetarium this week when party-goers, over-excited either by the UTH menswear on show or by the prospect of free drinks, careened into a waiter who deftly decapitated the astronomer's waxwork with a flying silver tray.

Contact Pandora by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk

No, I'm not jealous of Roald Dahl



TERENCE BLACKER

I prefer talking to children about literature, even when they are violently sick at my feet

ries which, after an innocent opening, became increasingly gruesome and violent. "You can ask me any questions you like," I told a small group of nine-year-olds at a special school. "Where d'you keep your wallet?" asked a boy at the back.

Normally, questions can range from the technical ("How d'you finish a story?") to the professional ("How much are you paid?") and

personal ("Are you jealous of Roald Dahl?"), but on this latest tour organised by the South-Eastern Education and Library Board, the emphasis was on the children's own writing.

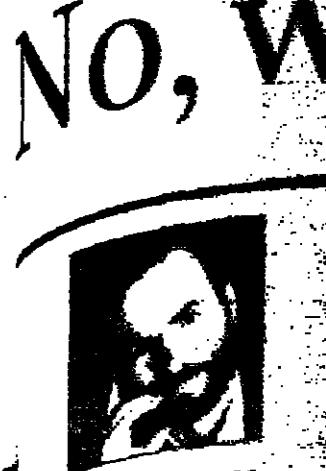
The classes I met were to take part in a story competition with children from Westminster and, over the hour or so we spent together, had come to me with a variety of authorial problems: writer's block; fear of dialogue; and, of course, those tricky moments when you're writing about football, go to the loo, return and start writing about hockey. One boy confessed that, whatever he was writing about, his story became all gory and horrible. A serious little girl in specs brought a couple of recent plays that she had written, about the *Titanic* and the *Hindenburg*.

On occasions like this, it is difficult to believe that there are relatively sane and influential people who still believe that the libraries are of marginal importance.

In the recent past, Conservative ministers would moan about declining standards of literacy while year after year overseeing the run-

ning-down of the library service. In spite of the laudable emphasis placed on books and literacy by the new Labour government, the picture remains grim. In the past 10 years, 48 per cent of authorities have closed libraries and 74 per cent have reduced opening hours, while the purchasing fund for new books has dropped by 12 per cent. It was not so long ago that a spokesman for the Adam Smith Institute - a pin-striped twit whose experience of the subject was probably limited to dozing over a copy of *The Spectator* at the London Library - argued that the library service catered exclusively for the middle classes and should be duly privatised.

Since then, successful initiatives, most notably The National Year of Reading and this week's World Book Day, have been introduced, and some library authorities have become notably more dynamic and innovative than they used to be, but still the old prejudices persist. Only the other day, the bookseller Tim Waterstone was to be found pronouncing that, with the arrival of book superstores, the day of the library was over.



TIMOTHY GARTON ASH
Author and political
commentator

Are foreign ballerinas the shape of things to come?



JOHN PERCIVAL

Some agree that British bodies, pear-shaped and thick legged do not suit present tastes in ballet

featuring men are the Russians Igor Zelensky and Irek Mukhamedov, the Cuban Carlos Acosta and the Argentinian Inaki Urlezaga.

And this is a company that used to insist on recruiting only British dancers. European Community rules would make that illegal now - but most of the names mentioned come from much further afield. That is true also of Deane's choices for the inaptly named English National Ballet, but that company has always been eclectic. I remember that once when I shared a flight with them from Monte Carlo, as the dancers divided up for immigration control, one of them called out "So, we do still have some British partners!"

But the practice of looking abroad for dancers has become far more widespread. Birmingham Royal Ballet, Scottish Ballet, Northern Ballet Theatre and Rambert Dance Company all have a high proportion of imports. So, incidentally, do leading American companies, but not those in Russia or France. So is it a question of physique, training - or both?

As it happens, they are an Australian member of the company and a Cuban guest ballerina. So does this bear out Deane's comments about the lack of good British dancers? Not entirely, but even if we assume (and I think we can) that everyone will kiss and make up before the company's next engagement, a summer season at Sadler's Wells, who else is announced for the two big productions there, *Giselle* and *Onegin*? Darcey Bussell and Sarah Dowell are English, so are Jonathan Cope and Sansom, but Sylvie Guillem, Leanne Benjamin and Miyako Yoshida come from France, Australia and Japan, while the other

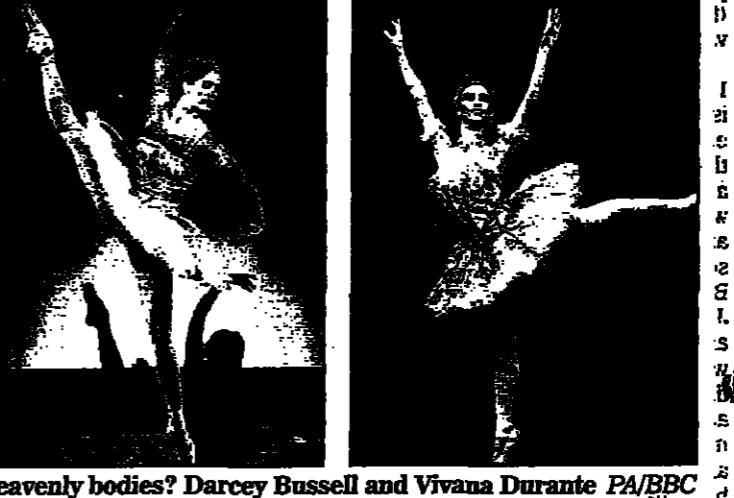
Some agree with Deane that British bodies, pear-shaped and thick legged, do not suit present tastes in ballet.

Selecting the right physique for training is part of the problem. One reason why China has begun producing first-rate dancers is that teachers from the Central Ballet School can travel the country picking out children with the best potential and offering them free residential education. And experience has taught them to look for girls from one region, boys from another, where the average body shape is different.

Laterly, the Royal Ballet School has taken to seeking out pupils around the country - partly in the hope of finding more boys and more students from ethnic minorities - but the results have not appeared too great. Both Derek Deane and Birmingham's David Bintley have said they have difficulty employing many graduates from what is supposed to be our leading dance school, and although Anthony Dowell has kept his mouth shut about Royal Ballet recruitment, his actions speak louder than words.

What happens to the pupils once they get into the schools is also vital, and it is far too soon to forecast what effect the Royal Ballet School's new Australian director, Galina Stock, will have; the word is that she knows what changes she would like in curriculum and staff, but has realised it will take a time to bring them into effect. Anyway, can teaching make all the difference?

Deane himself, in spite of his complaints about British physique, implies that it can when he boasts about one dancer who arrived "very pear-shaped" but was streamlined and given new muscular definition through English National Ballet's



Heavenly bodies? Darcey Bussell and Viviana Durante PA/BBC

training programme. Besides, the schools in Saint Petersburg and Paris have the reputation for helping their female pupils to develop long, slender legs.

So, given determination, care and time, we ought to be able to produce good English dancers again. But we have made things harder for ourselves by a change in taste. Tall and slender is the watchword, with Bussell and Guillerm being the exemplars. But that introduces another problem, since there are few good male dancers tall enough to partner them. And Margot Fonteyn, held up by Deane as the ideal, was not tall; and she was definitely "woman-shaped", even rather cuddly in her early years.

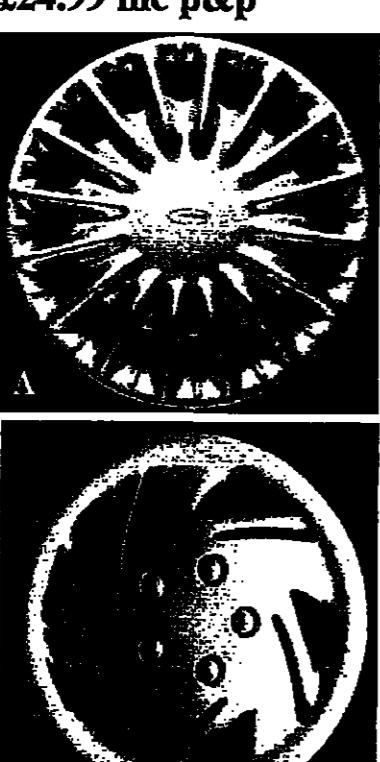
It is supposed to have been George Balanchine at New York City Ballet who introduced the mode for taller dancers. That he ignores the existence of a really tall dancer in Beryl Grey during the Royal Ballet's early years, and also the fact that Balanchine, while bringing forward several beautiful, tall women, always had ballerinas of

different shapes and sizes in his company, so that, like a painter with a wide palette of colours, he could make his ballets in a variety of styles and modes.

Which rather puts paid to Deane's pushing for one ideal shape. Look at the contrasted bodies we saw in William Forsythe's Frankfurt Ballet, which just had a great success in London. Or witness the varied dancers now performing exciting new ballets at the Paris Opéra. Or think back to one of the best dancers who worked for English National Ballet in recent years, Trinidad Sevilano, who was really tiny but moved big and had great depth of emotion.

My experience is that the important thing is to combine a variety of dancers - provided that they are good - with an interesting repertoire. That is what matters. So Deane's remark that he has "never shirked tackling mediocrity" is much more to the point. If he concentrates on that, rather than suggesting ideal body types, nobody will be able to argue with him.

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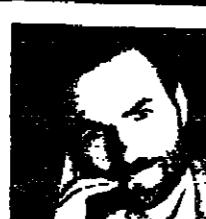
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No, we're right to fight this war


TIMOTHY GARTON ASH

The irony is if we had prepared the troops, we might not have had to use them. Because we didn't, we probably will

EVERY COUNTRY has its own sort of argument about this war. Characteristically, the currency of our British argument seems to be 19th-century statesmen. In a leading article entitled "End This Liberal War", *The Spectator* argues that we should "replace Gladstone with Bismarck or at least Disraeli". "The national interest has been scorned" in favour of a woolly attachment to the cause of "humanity in general", the magazine suggests.

In a commentary in *The Times* headlined "Bloody Liberals", Simon Jenkins also starts with Gladstone, and goes on to denounce the new "liberal imperialists" - specifically located in *The Independent*, *The Observer* and *The Guardian* - whom he finds to be distinguished by a "reckless recourse to force, especially air power". It is, he says, "as if they yearn to unleash their pent-up aggression against the sins of the world". In sum, the half-baked, emotional, romantic, moralistic, hypocritical, neo-Gladstonian pursuit of liberal values has led us into this mess, while only a cool, hard-nosed, Disraeliesque or Bismarckian appraisal of national interests will lead us (though hardly the Kosovars) back to the valley of peace and reason.

As something of a bloody liberal myself, I want to break a lance for neo-Gladstonism. But, since we also try to be bloody honest, let us start by acknowledging three things. First, there is something unusual, a touch of the *bol paradize*, about a war whose strongest supporters are on the left and fiercest critics on the right. Second, some of the rhetoric, whether from Tony Blair, Bill Clinton or the Nato spokesman Jamie Shea, has been over the top. Third, and most important, nearly a month into the war we can see that Nato began it with a disastrous miscalculation of Milosevic's reaction to an air offensive. His forces had made some quarter of a million Kosovar Albanians homeless in the year before the bombing began; they have expelled perhaps three times that number since. This is Nato's 50th birthday present to itself.

However, that tragic blunder does not in any sense flow consequentially from a liberal view of how we should act. Yes, the liberals Clinton and Blair misjudged the dictator Milosevic. But the conservative Neville Chamberlain misjudged Hitler; the conservative Churchill thought he had a deal with Stalin and the Gaullist Jacques Chirac admired the pragmatic moderniser Saddam Hussein. Underestimating the perfidy of dictators is the common fault of most democratic politicians. And the strategic mistake was not the decision to threaten the use of force. It was the decision to



A Macedonian Serb holds a portrait of Slobodan Milosevic during an anti-Nato demonstration in Skopje. Feihim Demir/EPA

start bombing without having prepared the ground troops to make the threat credible. The irony in this case is that if we had prepared the ground troops we might not have had to use them in combat; because we did not, we probably will. So the problem was not too much liberal readiness to intervene militarily, but too little.

Gladstone had been living at this hour! What Gladstone pioneered was an approach that attempted to marry liberal values to the traditional, unbounded self-interest of states. He preached (and preached) the pernicious of dictators is the common fault of most democratic politicians. And the strategic mistake was not the decision to threaten the use of force. It was the decision to

philosophy gained acceptance in principle by leading Western states only after 1945.

This approach still accepts as the foundation of international order the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of sovereign states. But it qualifies this by saying what rulers do to their own citizens, not purely their own affair, and there are a few extreme things they may do - such as killing, maltreating or expelling large numbers of those citizens - that in principle justify the intervention of the "international community" to prevent it, or at least to punish the perpetrators afterwards. This is the philosophy underpinning linkages between trade and respect for human rights, the

monitoring activities of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the international court for war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is what Tony Blair tries to articulate in his rather evangelical way.

"Humbug!" cry the scoffers from the hard-nosed "realist" right - and a few from the far left, too. "If these are your principles, why didn't you bomb the killers in Rwanda or East Timor? Or intervene to defend the Kurds against our Nato ally, Turkey?" Well, of course there are double standards - multiple standards, in fact. Yet it's also true that we can't intervene everywhere. Because I don't prevent a murder

in Brooklyn, it doesn't mean I shouldn't try to stop one in Camden. Duties are related to distance: strongest to those nearest.

So then comes the argument that we should act over Kosovo because it is "in Europe". This has to be handled with care. What we are emphatically not saying is that white European lives are more valuable than black African lives. What we are saying is that this is nearer to us and that we are part of European institutions that have a capacity to act in those parts and are directly affected by what happens there. Here the moral argument shades into the political one - the one about interests.

The non-interventionists tell us that they fail to see how any British national interests are involved. But that is, precisely, a failure to see. They are (since we are trading in dead prime ministers here) perpetrating the Neville Chamberlain mistake of believing that things happening in such faraway countries of which we know little will not affect us, too, in the end. Simon Jenkins, for example, has consistently argued for a British policy of non-intervention in Yugoslavia. I respect the consistency; but it is a dangerous illusion to believe that we could have left it to work itself out on its own.

No, what these critics force us to see is the folly of liberal interventionism, but the folly of half-measures. What we have needed all along, during the whole decade since the end of the Cold War, has been a systematic effort of neo-Gladstonian realism to build a liberal order for the whole of Europe. This would have required - and requires still - a many-sided commitment, economic, political, diplomatic, non-governmental as well as governmental, for a whole region. In such a policy, the dangerous paradox of "humanitarian war" is only the last resort, the ultimate deterrent. But then it has to be a credible deterrent, as our bombs clearly were not in this case.

Such a many-sided commitment also requires a commitment from many sides. Where the important principle of non-intervention is to be overridden, it is essential that as many different states as possible are involved. Otherwise any old state could bomb any other in the name of humanity. Gladstone foresaw this imperative of multilateralism, calling on "United Europe" to protest against Turkish brutality (ironically, the Serbs were among the people he was speaking up for). Perhaps the most difficult problem for liberal interventionists in supporting more decisive action in Kosovo, including the ground troops that alone can reverse the ethnic cleansing, is not the charge of double standards - that of ignoring interests - for the long-term interests are there - but this matter of the mandate. Yet having reached this point, having put Nato's credibility at stake, having precipitated the humanitarian disaster, we cannot allow Russia alone to veto further action.

To sustain popular support for such action, we have our latter-day Gladstones, Clinton and Blair, echoing the grand old man's magnificent peroration about the "affront to 'the laws of God, or if you like, of Allah'; to the moral sense of mankind at large". Well, is what Serb forces have done to the Kosovars such an affront? So let *The Spectator* support Bismarck on this issue; me, I'll stick with Gladstone.

'History of the Present: Essays, Sketches and Despatches from Europe in the 1990s' by Timothy Garton Ash will be published by Penguin in June

RIGHT OF REPLY

CONRAD RUSSELL


The Liberal Democrat peer responds to

yesterday's article by Donald Macintyre

IT HAS become fashionable for commentators and some politicians to be "activists", as Donald Macintyre has done ("On Ashdown's successor hangs the future of the Blair project"). Indeed I know serious politicians who use the word "activist", as it, as Brian Walden remarked in a different context, it were "some kind of strange new American swear word". We know how this happened: the Militant tendency and their ilk gave activism a bad name.

But could this be another example of the tendency of politicians to fight the last war? Can a political party have an active parliamentary party, or even a leader with experience of political judgement, without an active base to recruit them from? Can a political party win seats simply on the basis of an "airwaves war" alone?

It is not for me to answer for others. For the Liberal Democrats, about whom Mr Macintyre was making his remarks, I must say that activism is more important than they are for the other parties. Labour and the Tories have a significant hereditary vote, born with their party loyalty on their birth certificates. We, by contrast, have to win our votes by persuasion, seat by seat and election by election. It is experience, not just conventional wisdom, that leads us to say, "where we work we win".

Liberal Democrat activists are as able and as intellectually sophisticated a body of people as our parliamentarians. Many of them even have what our MPs lack: the experience of power. We do not need to preach to them about the compromises of power; they have made them.

We need our activists in a way the other two parties do not. They have sometimes needed to kick their activists in the teeth. If we do the same, we stab ourselves in the vitals.

How bees shamed the British army



TUESDAY BOOK

**THE HINGE FACTOR:
HOW CHANCE AND STUPIDITY
HAVE CHANGED HISTORY**
BY ERIK DURSCHMID
HODDER & STOUGHTON. £15.99

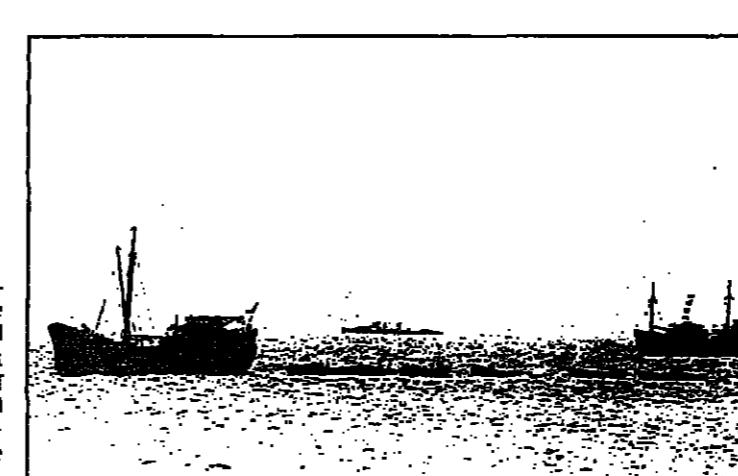
war, from the Siege of Troy to the Gulf war of 1991, that highlight the role of accident, error and the capricious twist of fate - the "hinge factor". Some of this is well-trodden ground: Agincourt, Waterloo - where the French cavalry forgot to spike captured British guns, which were then taken - the sinking of the *Bismarck*. Some is genuinely fresh: Antietam, in the American Civil War, where Union troops in no man's land stumbled upon the Confederate battle plan wrapped around three cigars; Tanga,

in East Africa, where in 1914 advancing British forces were routed by the sudden attack of a swarm of bees. And it's a connoisseur's delight to find out how a misplaced full stop in a brief order sent by Lord Raglan to Lord Lucan created that supreme misunderstanding, the Charge of the Light Brigade.

The interplay of factors in the history of conflict often surprises. Hitler, attacking France in 1940, was a strategic conservative - unlike his thrusting tank supremo, Guderian. He responded to a rare successful British riposte with tanks at Arras by ordering his panzers to pause and taking up Goering's offer to finish off the British with the Luftwaffe; hence the miracle of Dunkirk. With passages from soldiers' letters and diaries unearthed for the first time, Durschmid brings an eye for the telling detail.

But you may need to bypass the stomach-churning side. He is especially keen on the analogy of beetles to portray men struggling for life as forced immobility seals off their escape from bayonets or swords. The impact of death multiplied on death could make you wary of handing this book to a 14-year-old with a yen for true-life drama and a zeal for history.

Not that the author is callous. Rather, it's as if he is so familiar with fighting that he has covered Vietnam, Beirut, Belfast, Iraq and Afghanistan, that he tells war stories like a horror-comic addict. He fails to see that satiating your readers with blood and carnage breaks up genuinely capti-



The miracle of Dunkirk... all thanks to Hitler's strategic conservatism

vating snapshots of high drama. If he is laying on the gore to convey the tragedy of war, "man's favourite occupation", then he could have made his intentions clearer.

His tales of mayhem and confusion can be gripping, informative and genuinely idea-provoking. He reveals, again and again, the causal impact of happenstance - including weather shifts, officers who disobey orders and the sort of thousand-to-one chance that sank the *Bismarck* - without trudging patterns. His data suggest that victory often does not go to the big battalions or to those, like Eisenhower, who plan on formidably scientific lines: a useful reminder for Nato strategists now.

If Durschmid had added some sophistication to his action-packed reporter's approach, sidestepped the dead-end issue of nuclear Armageddon and lined up his insights next to a compelling debate on the role of chance in history, his book would cut more ice. The history of war needs to appeal beyond armchair strategists, military buffs and adventure-yarn devotees. We badly need more sceptical lay comment, informed with a deeper perspective, on the war we now watch on our screens.

ROBERT SILVER

THE INDEPENDENT PHOTOGRAPH



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Skip Spence

SKIP SPENCE, a founding member of Jefferson Airplane and Moby Grape, personified the lost genius of the psychedelic Sixties. A pivotal figure on the San Francisco scene, Spence's free spirit extended down the years; he named the Doobie Brothers and influenced Led Zeppelin, REO and Beck along the way.

He was born Alexander Spence in Canada in 1946, and was given a guitar by his parents at the age of 10. A precocious talent, he also played the drums in his school band, a skill which would come in handy when, having moved to California in the mid-Sixties, he dived into the burgeoning hippie scene of the Bay Area.

Spence had already been approached to join Quicksilver Messenger Service as a guitarist when he bumped into the singer Marty Balin at the Matrix, a San Francisco club also used as a rehearsal room. Dissatisfied with the drummer Jerry Peloquin, who was only in so the group could use his apartment in Haight Ashbury, the frontman offered the drumming stool to Spence, who looked the part. Spence jumped at the chance and joined a Jefferson Airplane line-up which also featured the guitarists Paul Kantner and Jorma Kaukonen and singer Signe Toly Anderson. "It's No Secret", the Airplane's first single, was released in February 1966, just as Jack Casady replaced the original bassist Bob Harvey.

Spence stayed with the Airplane for over a year and contributed several songs (notably "Blues From An Airplane") to their debut album, entitled *Jefferson Airplane Takes Off*, eventually issued by RCA Records later that year. Further personnel changes saw Anderson quit to have children and Grace Slick, formerly lead vocalist with the Great Society, take over, bringing with her "White Rabbit" and "Somebody To Love", two seminal compositions which became the Airplane's first hits and true flower-power anthems.

By the time these million-selling singles reached the US Top Ten in 1967, Spence, who felt his songwriting was being eclipsed by the other members' (though his "My Best Friend" was included on *Surrealistic Pillow*, the group's second album), had stopped attending rehearsals and was dismissed in favour of Spencer Dryden. At the same time, the Jefferson Airplane switched their management to a local concert promoter Bill Graham, leaving Matthew Katz in the lurch.

Katz kept Spence on his books and hatched a plan to form a band around him in San Francisco. He asked the guitarist Peter Lewis and bassist Bob Mosley to come up from Los Angeles to see if they fitted in. Adding a drummer, Don Stevenson, and guitarist, Jerry Miller, the group, Moby Grape, started to rehearse and instantly found a distinctive sound, blending three guitar parts, vocal harmonies and distinctive compositions of all five members, with Spence often at the helm. "Skippy was always 'high' on this other level," said Peter Lewis in

After two months of solid rehearsals in Sausalito, the group played the Fillmore in San Francisco in November 1966 and instantly started a bidding war between record companies. "When I first saw them play," remembers David Robinson, the A&R man who won the battle and signed the group to Columbia. "I knew this was a band that could go around the country, around the world and really kill!" Sam Andrews, guitarist with Big Brother and the Holding Company (featuring Janis Joplin), was full of praise too. "You guys are better than the Beatles," he told Lewis.

Indeed, the quintet's debut album, simply entitled *Moby Grape*, remains a classic of its time, worthy of inclusion alongside *The Beatles' Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and *Love's Forever Changes*, also released in 1967. Unfortunately, an over-eager record company and inept manager conspired to oversell the group with a lavish launch in June at the Avalon Ballroom during which thousands of purple orchids fell from the ceiling. The next day, Miller, Lewis and Spence were found in Marin County with three underage girls and duly arrested, though charges were later dropped.

Columbia also simultaneously issued five singles from the album when they should have been concentrating on the stunning "Omaha", a Spence composition which nevertheless crept into the Top 100. *Moby Grape* reached No 24 on the LP charts (though drummer Don Stevenson's raised finger had to be erased from the sleeve). "Omaha" was pure Spence energy," declared David Robinson later.

He was the maniacal core of the band, the guy who would say fuck it, let's do it anyway. He was an idiot savant. He couldn't add a column or figures, couldn't pay a check in a restaurant. But he saw things in a clear light. He could see through immediately to the truth of what was going on.

The truth was that the five members didn't get on. "Six months after we met, we were rock stars. That was horrible," admitted Lewis. Later that year, following abortive sessions in Los Angeles, the group were sent to New York to complete *Wow*, the follow-up album, which made the Top Twenty. The relocation seemed to have pushed Spence, who consumed psychedelic drugs at an alarming rate, over the edge. Considering that the singer had howled "Save me, save me!" when recording a demo of "See-

ing", the others should have seen the writing on the wall. One day in 1968, Spence went looking for them with an axe. He was jailed and committed to the Bellevue Hospital for six months.

The four remaining musicians attempted to carry on, even touring the UK, despite becoming embroiled in a dispute with Katz, who claimed all rights to the Moby Grape name and put together a bogus version of the band which played the ill-fated 1968 Altamont gig. The legal dispute would rumble on for years; the original group members attempting to reform even resorted to calling themselves Moby Grape or Legendary Grape.

Following his discharge from

hospital in 1968, Spence went to Nashville and in four days recorded the dark and whimsical *Oar*, a truly solo album on which he played every single instrument. Over the years, this record gained something of a cult following and, after its reissue on CD in 1993, was even the subject of a "Buried Treasure" feature in *Mojo* magazine. By then, Spence had been diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic and had been in and out of mental institutions for most of the Seventies and Eighties. Sometimes, he managed to rejoin his former cohorts but, more usually, he would contribute the odd track to one of their albums before disappearing again.

PIERRE PERRONE

Alexander Lee "Skip" Spence, singer, songwriter, guitarist, drummer; born Windsor, Ontario 18 April 1946; married (three sons, one daughter); died Santa Cruz, California 16 April 1999.



Spence (crouching) with the other members of Moby Grape Michael Ochs Archives / Redferns

Ellen Corby

THE DIMINUTIVE character actress Ellen Corby had contributed distinctive supporting performances to over 60 films before she became a household name with her portrayal of the tart-tongued grandmother in the television series *The Waltons*, for which she won three Emmy Awards. She was a regular on that series for eight years until a stroke curtailed her appearances. Earlier she had been an Academy Award nominee for her role of a lovelorn spinster in *I Remember Mama* (1947).

Of Scandinavian origin, she was born Ellen Hansen in Racine, Wisconsin in 1913 and started to work in the film industry as a continuity girl in 1934. After 12 years she switched to acting and made her screen debut in Henry Hathaway's film noir *The Dark Corner* (1946), with a telling bit part as a cleaning woman who finds a dead body.

It was the first of many roles for the dark-haired, thin-lipped actress as servants, spinsters or gossipy neighbours in films including *Concerned* (1946), *It's A Wonderful Life* (1946), *The Spiral Staircase* (1946) and *Forever Amber* (1947). Her finest screen role was in *I Remember Mama* (1947), George Stevens's beguiling transcription of Kathryn Forbes' novelised reminiscences of

growing up as a part of a Norwegian family in San Francisco.

Corby was immensely touching as horney middle-aged Aunt Katrien who falls in love with the local undertaker (Edgar Bergen) and is featured of her family's scorn ("If they laugh at me I yump in the river"). Nominated for an Oscar as Best Supporting Actress, she had stiff competition (Barbara Bel Geddes in the same film, Jean Simmons in *Hamlet*, Agnes Moorehead in *Johnny Be Good*, and Claire Trevor, who won the award for her role in *Key Largo*).

Subsequent roles included that of a midwife delivering Emma Bovary's child in *Vincente Minnelli's Madame Bovary* and a prominent role in *Jean Cromwell's stark depiction of life in a women's prison, Caged* (1950). Corby provided welcome light relief in the film as the scatterbrained killer of her abusive husband ("Who is this Pearl Harbor?").

In Allan Dwan's torrid thriller *Slightly Scarlet* (1957) she was maid-servant to red-headed sisters Rhonda Fleming and Arlene Dahl, and in Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) was one of the film's most contentious sequences, as the boarding-house receptionist who denies to the hero James Stewart that her tenant (Kim Novak) has been in the house that day

elist, was reputedly not a big hit in the large cities, but was loved by middle and rural America as well as in many other countries, including Britain. For her role as acerbic Esther (Grandma Walton, Corby won the Emmy Award as Best Supporting Actress in a Drama three times in 1973, 1975 and 1976).

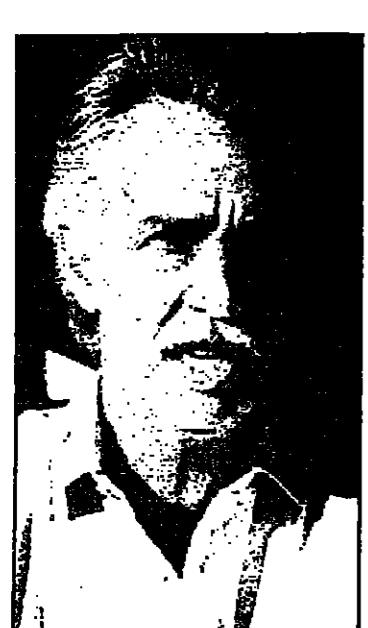
When she suffered a stroke in 1977 (the season in which the Waltons moved out of the Depression and into the Second World War), her character was written out of the series with an illness, and Corby was seen only in the season's final episode, when Grandma came home to Walton's Mountain though partly incapacitated (it was one of the most the show's most sentimentally affecting segments). It was Ellen Corby's last appearance on the series, which finished in 1981, but she returned to play Grandma again in three television movies based on the show, *A Day of Thanks on Walton's Mountain* (1982), *A Wedding on Walton's Mountain* (1983) and *A Walton's Easter* (1997).

TOM VALLANCE

Ellen Hansen (Ellen Corby), actress; born Racine, Wisconsin 3 June 1913; died Los Angeles 14 April 1999.



Corby as Grandma Walton in *The Waltons*, with Richard Thomas (top, John Boy) and Will Geer (Grandpa) Kobal Collection



Castro: unparalleled sense of Venezuela's problems

LUIS CASTRO was Venezuela's most prominent and persuasive political intellectual, and had been talked of as a possible president. He died suddenly in Chicago where he was at the end of a visiting professorship - ready, he said a few days earlier, to return to Venezuela to do battle.

Castro was a philosopher and historian. He took particular pleasure in his election in 1982-83 to what was, to him, the ironically named Simón Bolívar Professorship of Latin American Studies at Cambridge and a fellowship at Trinity. There and in Chicago, and in what leisure he could find in Caracas, he had been working on what would have been his great work, a history of political thinking in Spanish America.

He was born in 1943, and studied philosophy and Roman Law in Caracas and Paris. It was in Cam-

bridge, however, in the early Seventies, that he found his voice. He did so through the arcane route of a doctoral dissertation on "the history of the English jury as a fact-finding institution in the later middle ages".

The late medieval jury, he argued, remained a communal institution, but in the changing property relations of the period, respected social difference and took a sceptical line on truth. It coincided with the invention of the legal trust. Castro returned to Venezuela convinced that institutions of this kind, public spirited, independent, and uncorrupt, were England's distinctive contribution to public life, that FW Maitland, co-author of *History of English Law*, 1895 was their greatest historian, and that Cambridge was a model of what a society of trust could be.

Venezuela, he argued from his pro-

fessorial chairs and his influential presidency - some years later - of the International Institute for Advanced Studies in Caracas, was altogether less admirable. For nearly 200 years, the political class had been locked in pointless debate between an aversive conception of honour called republican, and one or another kind of abstract liberalism. The fantasy of the one, aristocratic and bellicose, imagined too much solidarity, the fantasy of the other, in dreams of lawyers and more recently, of economists influenced by the US, too little.

Venezuela's republicanism has been enshrined in the myth of its liberator, Simón Bolívar, and been protected by the army. At the end of another dictatorship, in 1958, civilians tried finally to remove the military from politics. They had some success. Rising incomes from oil bought

20 years of peace. In the later 1980s, however, the revenues shrank, exposed a large public debt, and brought avarice, a brief riot, and renewed paralysis. In 1992, the army decided that it must again save the republic from itself. Its two coups failed, but in December last year, out of prison and riding popular discontent, the leader of the first, Hugo Chávez, was elected president. The cycle appeared to have begun again.

Castro had been invited earlier that year to address the Congress (and through television the country) on the problems ahead. His sense of these - moral, political, intellectual, above all emotional - was unparalleled. It was an arresting speech, and there were calls for him to enter the presidential race. But he was the first to see the irony in yet another mere oratorical triumph. He had often

reduced his foreign friends to helpless laughter in cruel imitation of a Latin American politician trying to demonstrate in English or French (he had a magical facility with language) what it was to belong to this or that party. He himself belonged to none.

He had friends from many sides, former guerrillas as well as wise liberals, and was a close confidant of the previous president. Even those opposed to him were forced to acknowledge his integrity. He augmented his small salary with visiting professorships and a popular Friday evening television programme on sport. Friends could be nervous in their laughter as he drove through the rain in his decomposing car, one hand working the wiper from the outside, the other raised in vivid gesture. His warnings to Congress have proved correct. The new pres-

ident is putting ex-soldiers into positions of power and threatening a constitutional coup.

Luis Castro had an astonishing understanding of people, events and ideas, and a mesmerising charm. His lectures, essays, and books - and for those in Venezuela and beyond who knew him, his wit and humanity - remain. His funeral in Caracas was a moment of great public as well as private grief.

GEOFFREY HAWTHORN

Luis Hernán Castro Leiva, political philosopher; born Caracas 23 February 1943; Professor of Politics and Philosophy, Central University of Venezuela, and Professor at the Simón Bolívar University, Caracas 1978-99; married 1967 Beatrice Kervel (two sons), 1993 Carole Leal; died Chicago 8 April 1999.

Luis Castro

Olwen Price

THE WELSH mezzo-soprano Olwen Price was one of those singers who are invaluable to an opera company. She had a large repertoire of character roles (and one or two larger roles) in which she could be relied upon to give an excellent, idiomatic performance, while her voice and style could easily adapt to composers from Mozart to Menotti, from Verdi to Vaughan Williams. Although the greater part of her career was spent with Sadler's Wells Opera, she also sang for the BBC - once assisting the great tenor Beniamino Gigli in a recital - and with Welsh National Opera.

Price began to study singing privately at the age of 18 with WJ Watkins in Merthyr Tydfil. She also studied at the University of Wales in Cardiff. In 1957 at the National Eisteddfod of Wales, held that year at Machynlleth, she won not only the prize for contralto solo, but the Blue Ribbon awarded to the best vocalist. She joined Sadler's Wells Opera during the war, when the company was homeless, leading an ambulant life around the country, occasionally appearing in London at the New Theatre. Another member of the company at that time was the Welsh character tenor David Tree, whom she later married. In 1947 Tree joined the newly formed Covent Garden Opera Company, as it was then called, where he gave over 1,000 performances before his retirement. Price remained at Sadler's Wells.

Throughout the 1950s Price continued to appear, sometimes as often as 50 times a season. In 1950/51, for instance, she sang Marthe in Gounod's *Faust*; Mistress Quickly in Verdi's *Fulstaf* (she also sang the same role in Vaughan Williams's *St John in Love*); Aunt Jane in Vaughan Williams's *Hugh the Drover*; La Frugola in Puccini's *Il tabarro* and Zita in his *Gioria Schicchi*; Mamma Lucia in Mascagni's *Costelluccio russo*; Ludmila in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*; and Berta in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. Most of these, apart from *Mamma Lucia*, were comic roles, but Price was just as effective in tragic opera, as her Suzuki in *Madam Butterfly*, or Azucena, one of her finest interpretations, in Verdi's *Il trovatore*, which she sang during the 1951/52 season, roles.

Another of her best roles was *Filipievna*, Tatiana's old nurse in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, which she sang on several occasions. In 1953 Price made a deep impression as Maurya, the old woman at the centre of Vaughan Williams's *Riders to the Sea*, whose husband and six sons have all been drowned at sea off the Isle of Arran. The contralto tones at the bottom of her voice were particularly suited to this role; the composer himself was apparently very pleased with her performance, which many thought the finest she had given at Sadler's Wells. Other 20th-century operas in which she took part, both in 1954, were Menotti's *The Consul*, in which she sang John Sorel's Mother, and the world premiere of Lennox Berkeley's *Nelson*, where she sang Madame Serafin, the Neapolitan fortune-teller who foresees the death of Nelson during a reception at the Hamiltons' palazzo.

Price's last new role at Sadler's Wells, in 1959, was Madelon, the old woman in Giordano's *Andrea Chénier*, who offers her youngest, teenage son to fight for Revolutionary France, as his two elder brothers have already been killed. Then in 1961 she sang Azucena with WNO, and the following year Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Berta in *The Barber of Seville*, Hedwige, the protagonist's wife, in Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*, and Sofia, the mother of Oronte (the tenor) in Verdi's *I Lombardi alla prima crociata*, also for WNO, who brought the last named opera to Sadler's Wells in 1962.

ELIZABETH FORBES

Olwen Price, opera singer; born Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorgan 15 September 1903; married David Tree (died 1972; one daughter); died Merthyr Tydfil 6 April 1999.

Olwen
Price

Sir Jamie Flanagan

THE CAREER of Jamie Flanagan, the first Ulster Catholic to become head of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in 1973, is a demonstration of the complexity of Northern Irish life; a complexity often obscured by ideologically motivated distortions and unhistorical oversimplifications.

In 1934, the young Flanagan joined the RUC. In 1935, the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Sir James Craig, boasted of a Protestant parliament for a Protestant state. In such a context, Flanagan's decision to join the Northern Irish police force is difficult to fathom. But placed in a broader context, Flanagan's notion is rather more comprehensible.

Jamie Flanagan's father was a sergeant in the old Royal Irish Constabulary – a force which was by the time of the IRA campaign of 1919 to 1921 almost 80 per cent Catholic. Some of these Catholic policemen who had seen their colleagues cut down by the IRA harboured strongly anti-Republican sentiments, and were happy enough to serve the new Unionist government in Northern Ireland, established in 1921, which was committed at that time to preserving one-third of its places in the police force for Catholics.

The situation was complicated by the fact that Michael Collins, following his well-tried *modus operandi* in the South, attempted to place spires within the new Royal Ulster Constabulary. Nevertheless, even the strongly Orange Minister of Home Affairs in the Northern Ireland government, R. Dawson Bates, believed that there had to be a strong Catholic presence in the police – he made a point of supporting the promotion of Catholic officers as against the claims of more overtly political (in the Protestant and Unionist sense) candidates.

Denis Donoghue's memoir *Warrenpoint* (1991) is a testimony to the view that, none the less, Catholic policemen suffered discrimination under the Stormont regime. Flanagan, however, does not seem to have expected this. At the point when he joined the force, 11 out of 19 Head Constables in Belfast were Catholics and Catholic sergeants comprised 40 out of a total of 105; the great difficulty was at constable level, only 85 out of 624 policemen were Catholics, partly an index of the Northern regime's drastically fading commitment to the relatively pluralist ideals of the 1920s; a fading commitment excused by reference to the irredentist and extravagantly Catholic ethos of the Irish state.

Flanagan, none the less, might well have expected to enjoy a speedy rise once joined the RUC; and this is precisely what happened. In 1939 he was transferred from Downpatrick to Fermanagh



Flanagan (left) in Belfast in 1974 with Patrick Malone, Police Commissioner of the Irish Republic PA

and made Sergeant; the same year he married Florence Acheson, a Protestant.

In this era this was regarded as a rapid promotion and the pattern was to be sustained. In 1941 he was appointed Head Constable in Londonderry; in 1942 he became a District Inspector and was transferred to the security control unit which had sensitive wartime responsibilities; at the time there was an upsurge of IRA activity within the city

linked with support for Nazi Germany. In 1945, Flanagan was seconded for

Flanagan's period as Chief Constable of the RUC was a controversial one. He was never comfortable in these treacherous waters

duty with the British mission to Greece and he served there until 1952. At this point, he was appointed MBE. He returned to the RUC, working in the celebrated B Division of West Belfast in the late 1950s, at the time of the IRA's least successful campaign; in 1961 he achieved the rank of County Inspector. Flanagan was appointed OBE on the eve of the outbreak of the Troubles in June 1968.

temporary ceasefire in 1975. Certainly there were those – and they included senior members of the power-sharing executive which was forced out of office by the strike – who, not without reason, felt that the RUC did not act vigorously enough against the strikers.

It should be recalled, however, that the army, and not the police, enjoyed primacy in security policy in this period.

On the other hand, during the ceasefire of 1975, there were those who felt that the RUC was being politically manipulated so that it would go easy on the IRA.

Flanagan was never entirely comfortable in these treacherous waters. He was most definitely not a "political" policeman. A spruce, well-groomed, outgoing and approachable man, with vigorous powers of expression – both in voice and on paper – he preferred to confine himself to matters of policing; he was always, in particular, highly sensitive to the morale of the men in a force which was to lose 299 members in the course of the Troubles. Flanagan's exceptional humanity was always evident in his treatment of grieving families – for whom he did much in a practical, as well as emotional, sense.

Jamie Flanagan avoided political comment, but he did feel that some in the hierarchy of his own church displayed a certain coolness towards him.

PAUL BEW

James Bernard Flanagan, police officer: born 15 January 1914; MBE 1952; OBE 1968, CBE 1973; County Inspector RUC 1961-70; Assistant Chief Constable 1973-76; Kt 1975; married 1938 Florence Acheson (two sons, one daughter); died 4 April 1999.

BIRTHS,
MARRIAGES
& DEATHS

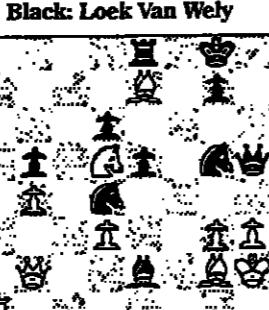
DEATHS

FORBES: Jan, née Andrews. Widow of Sir Hugh Forbes, darling mother of Sir Hugh and mother of Joseph. Died peacefully in the Royal Marsden Hospital on 15 April 1999. Service of thanksgiving at St Mary's Square, W2, on Friday 23 April at 2pm. No fixed service at Royal Marsden Hospital, sent to Fundraising Dept, Royal Marsden Hospital, Downs Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5PT.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Marriages, Deaths, Memorials, Weddings, anniversaries, in memoriam), telephone 0171-832 2012 or fax to 0171-293 2010; notices are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements must be submitted in writing and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



Black: Loek Van Wely

White: Matthew Sadler

With the match position desperate, Matthew heroically spurned the draw with 44 Ke3 Qg3+ 45 Ke4 etc. 44...Rc8+ 47 Kb6 f3 48 Ra7? He could have tried 48 Bx3 Qx3 49 Ra7? 48...Rb8+ 49 Ka5? 49 Kc8 was still a draw. Matthew had missed Loek's next, which threatens mate. 49...Qg5! 50 Rg7+ Qxg5 51 Qxg7+ Kxg7 52 Bx3. And Van Wely eventually won the game. When Yusupov could later only draw, Sadler's bravery was retrospectively validated.

See diagram. The game staggered on: 38 g4? Bxg4? 38...Nd3+ 39 Kxh3? 10 gxa6 Nf2 was mate!

38 Bxg4 Nf3+ 40 Kgs Qxg5 41 hxg4 Kxg4+ 42 Kxh3 Rf8+ 43 Kxh4 Qxh4+ 44 Nf4.

GAZETTE

FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES

Mr P. C. Crowne and Miss P. M. Lonsdale
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Charles and Beatrice Crowne, of Barnham Market, Norfolk, and Penny, daughter of John and Moya Lonsdale, of Cambridge.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Alan Beith MP, 56; Professor Derek Bowtell QC, former editor, Queen's College, Cambridge, 72; Mr Michael Brandon, actor, 54; Mr Ray Brooks, actor, 60; Sir Geoffrey Chipperfield, former civil servant, 66; The Right Rev Frederick Darwent, former Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney, 72; Mr Richard de Lange, chairman and managing director, Philips Electronics UK, 54; Mr Sebastian Fawkes, writer, 46; Miss Nina Foch, actress, 75; Mr Graeme Fowler, cricketer, 42; Mr John Eliot Gardiner, conductor, 58; Mr Mauricio Gugelmin, racing driver, 36; Mr Paul Heiney, writer and broadcaster, 50; Mr Giles Henderson, Senior Partner, Slaughter and May, 57; Miss Louise

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Napoleon III (Charles Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte), Emperor of France, 1808; Odilon Redon, painter, 1840; Adolf Hitler, dictator, 1889; Harold Lloyd, comedian, 1893; Joan Miro, abstract painter, 1893; Deaths: Claudio Coello, painter, 1693; Antonio Canalejo, painter, 1768; Abraham Brani Stoker, theatre manager and author of *Dracula*, 1912; Christian X, King of Denmark, 1947; Mr Ryan O'Neal, actor, 58; Mr Rodger Pannone, solicitor, and former president of the Law Society of England and Wales, 55; Mr Leslie Phillips, actor, 75; Mr Eric Pickles MP, 47; Sir John Quicke, agriculturist, 77; Mr Richard Rhodes, Headmaster, Rossall School, Lancashire, 57; Mr Hugh Roberts, Director of the Royal Collection, 51; Mr Christopher Robinsson, organist and director of music, St John's College, Cambridge, 62; Mr Peter Snow, broadcaster, 61; Miss Jean Southworth QC, 73; Mr Gerry Steinberg MP, 54; Mr Luther Vandross, soul singer, 48; Air Marshal Sir Richard Wakeford, 77; Mr Henry Wrong, director, European Arts Foundation, 69.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Rebecca Lyons, "North and South: Leighton, Cimabue's 'Celebrated Madonna' is carried in Procession through the Streets of Florence", 1pm; Victoria and Albert Museum: Sarah Bowles, "Some Pictures of Tudor and Stuart Furniture", 2pm; Tate Gallery: James Beard, "Modern British Narrative", 1pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Prince Edward, Patron, Scottish Badminton Union, attends the finals of the European Junior Badminton Championships at Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, and, as Chairman, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Association holds a lunch at St George's Palace, in aid of the Gold Millennium Encounter, a joint venture between the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the President's Award. Guests: Mrs Mary McAleese, President of Ireland also attends. The Duke of Gloucester, Patron, the Commonwealth Trust for Youth, attends a party at Drapers' Hall, London EC2.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guards at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11am; band provided by the Scots Guards.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr Justice Mance, to be Lord Justice of Appeal; Mr John Wright, to be part-time Regional Chairman of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for the West Midlands and North West Region.

CREATIVITY

SUGGESTIONS WERE sought for appropriate forms of transport. Circus equine artists: deux-chevaux (Bill Richardson); Rupert Murdoch: solar-powered car; Scrooge: ghost train; Barry Manilow: Conkord (Derek Holmes); Chancellors of the Exchequer: always take taxis; Delia Smith: catamaran (Jeff & Marg Thomas); Voyer: a pheasant carrier; shipwrecked sailors: on a bar-hack built for two; the Lone Ranger: a Keemo Saab (Peter Thomas); The British Raj: a Memsaab; Ronnie Biggs: doggem car; Buddy Holly: that'll be the Daewoo (Tony Brandon); Buddy Holly: on Pegasus; Ozymandias: a works motorbike; Dick Turpin: a tandem delivery bike; a wiflet: a Bathyscopic United Arab Emirates: the Emir Space Station (Bruce Birchall); Colonial irrigationist: a purge-oh; Mafiosi with poor memory: Don-que? (Sue John); Jack and Jill: a cable car (John Vinnicombe).

WFF Committee: Fiat Panda (Mary Brooker); Vaughan Williams: VW; the BFG: a Grenada (Matthew White); Wordsworth

Daf: King Arthur; Morgan (Andrew Duncan); A Constable: a haywain; a drug user: a smach (Nicholas E. Gough).

Rada teacher: stagecoach; drug dealer: speed-boat (Tim Stone); Davy Crockett: a Vauxhall Frontier (Clive Motham); Kleenex salesmen: by chochcho; Mrs Hague: a fiesta (Eric Dunkley); Strip cartoonists: by balloon (John Pickin); Leyton football fans: the Orient Express; Mephistopheles: a Helicopter (Mike Gifford); Bezelbubble car (B.B.); Bus de Keaton (P.T.); Attila the Hun (M.G.); Alf: a Romeo (Ross Cranston QC); Solicitor General, and Philip Sales (Treasury Solicitor) for the Speaker and Authorities of the House of Commons as intervenors.

Bill Richardson, Jeff & Marg Thomas and Derek Holmes win Chambers Dictionary of Quotations. Imaginative uses for sticks of rhubarb to Loki. Valtellina: bunternet.com or Creativity, 1 Canada Square, London E1 5DL, by 28 April. The Creativity Readers' Group, Allies in Wonderland, will hold an afternoon Creativity Challenge on Sunday 6 June in a pub function room in Paddington, London (see for details).

AN ACTION for libel brought by a Member of Parliament, the subject matter of which had been investigated by the House of Commons, should not be struck out as an abuse of process.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the defendant's appeal against the refusal to strike out the plaintiff's claim for damages for libel.

The plaintiff, a former Member of Parliament, commenced proceedings for libel against the defendant, complaining of a broadcast made by the defendant in the course of a television documentary programme in January 1997, in which the defendant accused the plaintiff of seeking and accepting from the defendant cash for questions asked by him in the House of Commons.

Those allegations were the subject of an investigation by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards (PCS), the results of which were adopted by the Committee on Standards and Privileges (CSP) in a report which was subsequently approved by Parliament. The PCS found that the plaintiff had received cash from the defendant for lobbying services. Desmond Broune QC and Adrienne Page (Crocker's Oswald Hickson) for the plaintiff; George Carman QC, James Price QC and Heather Rogers (D.J. Freeman) for the defendant; Ross Cranston QC, Solicitor General, and Philip Sales (Treasury Solicitor) for the Speaker and Authorities of the House of Commons as intervenors.

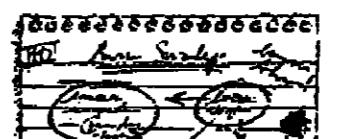
The principle enunciated in Hunter was a general principle intended to prevent that kind of abuse of process inherent in the re-litigation of an issue already once fairly and fully litigated in a competent court. The court, therefore, had to judge the procedural quality of the earlier proceedings. However, in relation to the procedures adopted by the PCS, the CSP's report, and the approval of it by the House of Commons, together or individually, constituted "proceedings in Parliament" for the purposes of article 9 of the Bill of Rights 1689, or of any wider principle which might protect such proceedings from direct or indirect judicial interference.

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There was a wider principle, namely that the courts would not challenge or assault, by any order of their own, an assertion of authority issued by Parliament pursuant to Parliament's own procedures. However, that principle did not of itself bar the plaintiff's libel action, which involved no such assertion by the court. The court should only decline to hear the plaintiff's libel claim if it were persuaded that the possibility of a result being arrived at which was inconsistent with the conclusions of the PCS would be to undermine the authority of Parliament.

KATE O'HANLON Barrister

OBITUARIES/7



MATHEMATICAL NOTES

BRIAN BUTTERWORTH

The secret of genius is very hard work

WHY ARE some people good at numbers and others bad? In the movie *Good Will Hunting*, our hero, Will, is a young man working as a janitor at MIT who turns out to be a mathematical prodigy comparable to Ramanujan, the poor Indian clerk who was perhaps greatest prodigy of them all. However, instead of studying mathematics, Will has always preferred to go out drinking with his friends from the neighbourhood.

Where does the talent come from? Will tries to explain by comparing himself to Mozart. "He looked at a piano... he could just play. I could always just play. That's the best I can explain it."

Is it possible to identify some kind of biological gift for maths? Surely, prodigies started with a few more of the relevant brain cells than you or I. A few years ago, the papers carried the story of the (re)discovery of Einstein's brain. Its left parietal lobe – the area of the brain crucially involved in numerical processes – had brain cells more densely packed than normal. Are these extra cells what made him a great mathematician?

This idea sounds plausible, but it cannot be proved by correlating the number of parietal cells with numerical ability, because, as we all know, correlation is not cause. Being good at numbers could be the cause of more cells rather than the consequence. That is, the

brain could assign more parietal cells to number tasks, or hold on to more parietal cells (since brain cells start dying from the day we are born), precisely because that part of the brain is constantly exercised. Activity-dependent brain changes are now well-documented. For example, a Braille-reader's reading finger is connected with a far larger network of brain cells than the other fingers. What is more, the size of the network increases with Braille-reading, and decreases after a couple of days rest from it. Does this mean anyone can be a prodigy if they work at it long enough and hard enough? There is an intriguing piece of evidence. At the end of the last century, Alfred Binet, inventor of the intelligence test, compared the two outstanding prodigies of the day, who made their living demonstrating calculating prowess, with three university students and four cashiers at the Paris department store Bon Marché. The prodigies were much faster than the students, but on most tests they were slower than the cashiers! The cashiers were a fairly random selection of Parisians, but they'd had at least 14 years practice at the till, learning factors, products and tricks of the calculating trade.

All mathematical prodigies spend most of their waking hours on mathematics. They aren't just working on their own new ideas, they are also learning what other mathematicians have discovered. Imagine going back in time, and presenting Archimedes, the greatest mathematician of antiquity, with an equation that the average A-level student would find easy, such as finding the roots of a quadratic equation. Without doing a lot of homework, Archimedes would be completely stumped. The notation itself would have posed the first barrier. The numerals with zero were invented by Hindu mathematicians 700 years after his death, and "—" = by the Englishman Robert Recorde in the 16th century when, as it happens, the idea that equations could have negative roots had just reached the West.

How then could Will even understand the problems that the MIT professor was setting his class? However, gifted, he would have had to have spent less time in his cups, and more time in his books. In his study of geniuses, Francis Galton concluded that there could be no exceptional ability, "without an adequate power of doing a great deal of very laborious work".

Brian Butterworth is Professor of Cognitive Neuropsychology at University College London, and author of *The Mathematical Brain*, published this month by Macmillan

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

oversight, n.

Such is her woolly style that her editors are guilty of one *oversight* after another. One might assume that, in her positive sense of the word, this is an American coining, but, no, as a word for both supervision and neglect, it goes back to the 15th century. The book does, however, have a splendid *oversight* by Salinger. He once failed to smoke salmon in his chimney, instead of making one of his many trips to Bloomingdale's.

Compensation claims are bankrupting society, says a report. So who takes responsibility? By Lynne Wallis

You can't always get what you want



Vincenzo and Eileen Dallaglio: received no compensation at all for the loss of their daughter Francesca

PA

A report published yesterday, attacking Britain's movement towards the compensation culture of the US, says the £6.8bn paid annually in damages to victims of accidents and trauma must be reduced. The right-wing Centre for Policy Studies think-tank says that the trend towards huge payouts is threatening Britons' capacity to take risks and innovate, and is damaging human relationships. "Courting Mistrust" applauds the relatives of those who died in the Aberfan disaster of 1966 for not launching prosecutions.

Eileen Dallaglio, a bereaved mother and member of the Marchioness Action Group, is astounded by the report. Mrs Dallaglio, whose daughter Francesca, 19, died when the *Marchioness* was sunk on the Thames in 1989, failed to secure any compensation for bereavement, trauma or financial loss, though many families were awarded £1,000-27,000 for bereavement under the terms of the Fatal Accidents Act of 1975.

Mrs Dallaglio was initially offered £5,000 by the owners of the *Bow belle*, the sand-dredger that collided with the *Marchioness*. The sum was increased to £19,000 and, three days before court, £50,000 was offered under a condition known as "calderbank": if the judge awards less than the offer, it is withdrawn and nothing is payable. The judge awarded £16,000, calculated on the money Francesca would have made as a ballet dancer, and "gifts" she would have made to her parents. Eileen therefore got nothing.

"Hillsborough set a precedent," she says. "It was deemed that you can only suffer psychological shock if you view the aftermath within an hour of the deaths. This clearly is utter nonsense. The psychological shock took me nine years to get over. When you suffer a tremendous shock, and what can only be described as pathological grief, it renders you incapable of thinking for yourself: people lose jobs and livelihoods. Yet one month after my daughter's death I had to complete a statement of claim, listing expenditure such as the cost of the

coffin and the cost of my daughter's ballet lessons."

When two-and-a-half years after the *Marchioness* tragedy, it emerged that the hands of the deceased had been removed for finger-printing purposes, Eileen Dallaglio's husband had a heart attack and he was forced to resign from a senior lectureship.

"He worked as a butler to pay the mortgage," says his wife. "And yet police officers affected by disasters retire on their compensation – even though they are paid to do a job that carries an element of risk. It should not be necessary for emotionally crippled people to fight for compensation. The boat was in-

sured to the tune of £5m. No money could ever compensate anybody for loss of life, but why bother insuring lives if the money isn't paid out?" "Courting Mistrust" attacks not only damages claims, but also fees paid to lawyers, particularly those who work on a "no win, no fee" basis. But for many who seek compensation the legal fees are paid out of damages, however paltry.

Karen Newman, 37, was awarded £10,500 under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS) after a savage assault by her brother-in-law, but £3,500 was eaten up by fees. Karen failed to win costs, and got no payment for trauma. She no longer works, as the nerve end-

ings in her hands are too damaged. Her brother-in-law committed suicide a year ago.

"I've had to be strong because I've got children," says Karen. "But I can't see myself in a normal working environment again because I don't trust people... I don't even trust my husband 100 per cent, because you can't after what I've been through. I'd known my brother-in-law for 24 years, and look what he did to me. At least I know what won't do it again."

"But it was still decided that it was just my physical health that suffered. I should have got more. People should get compensation because of the loss of earnings, if nothing else. You have to pay the mortgage somehow."

Tamara Wilder, of Victim Support, says the current tariff of payments under the CICS (which awards £80m a year) is too inflexible. "It's literally so much for an arm, so much for a rape," she explains. "It's like a menu. It can work, but there needs to be room for individual cases to be judged."

When a victim is awarded money under the CICS, their benefits may be eroded and some benefits may be removed to nothing. Wilder adds: "This is all wrong, when you consider it's supposed to be compensation to a victim of a crime, not living costs."

THE JOYS OF MODERN LIFE

42. ADVERTISING SCIENCE BY ROBERT WEBB

"PAY ATTENTION," warns Jennifer Aniston in her TV ad for some beauty product or other. "Here comes the science." And I always do pay attention. It's not that I'm curious about the chemical content of cosmetics; I just love the words. Liposomes. Hydro-fixers. Nanocapsules. Microscopic Beads: this is poetry in lotion.

Of course I have no idea what Elastesse or Nutri-ceramide actually do. But, like Chancer or the nonsense verse of Lear and Carroll, they can be enjoyed for their sound alone. Plaque-riden teeth now shine thanks to Actisan; anarchic free radicals are disarmed by noble Antioxidants; dull, lifeless skin is rejuvenated with Lipids. The propensity for fancy techno-babble is not restricted to ads for the gunk we apply to our bodies. These days even petfood comes enriched with something called Omega 6. This is great news. I don't know how some dwindling star in a distant galaxy can make your cat's hair shine, but I'm sure there are plenty of New Agers out there who do, and maybe a few cats. I just wonder what happened to the first five Omegas? I'd like to see this trend spreading to other sectors of the market. Let's look forward to commercials for brown bread with



added Xanadu 43 and for cook-in sauces seasoned with vitamin-rich Ozymandas 25.

It's also reassuring to know that my shampoo, now with Exclusive Silicone Protective Spheres, has been subject to "clinical trials". Although this sounds mildly fascistic, I'm quite sure that a clinical trial is not at all sinister. Some products will inevitably be found guilty. "Zis moisturiser appears to be lacking its full complement of Natural Carotenoids. Take it down to the laboratory at once for a double dose of Bio-Marine Complex". Those acquired are then advertised on TV.

I am happy to be blinded by science. I take great solace in the knowledge that my hair cuticles will be smoothed by Pro-panthenol B5. As I plod the supermarket aisles though, I wonder what would happen were I to accost a shelf-stacker and ask to be led to the stuff advertised on telly last night which functions on Artificial Technology. Would they know what it is, and where to find it? I suspect not. The words sound as if they should be familiar, but out of context they can be as meaningless as a Jabberwocky. Which is how the best poetry should be.

The chairmen of the bored

Tasha spends a weekend locked in the house – and decides to become Ally McBeal. By Cayte Williams



ROBBIE
studying
economics

LEONA
was studying
maths

DAVID
studying
management

IAN
studying
geography

TASH
studying
management

ALISTAIR
studying
management

ROSIE
studying
French

WHEN THE students moved into their huge, rambling house in Fallowfield, they thought it had "limitless possibilities". Not any more. There's only so much squalor a student can take.

"The house is horrible," says Tasha. "Even the boys think it's nasty now. When we moved in, it felt like it hadn't been lived in for 20 years, but we didn't mind. Now none of us can stand it any more. It's so grim. The landlord hates us, the living room's cold and we can't make out-going calls on the telephone." Rather than being a home, it is, as Tasha says, "functional. We sleep and work here, and that's it".

Over Easter, both Tasha and Alistair did time in the house on their own. "I was supposed to be working on essays," says Alistair, "but I was just sitting there staring, or

wandering around the house. I feel like I've been in prison."

Over the Bank Holiday, Tasha inadvertently locked herself in the house. "I didn't have my keys, so I couldn't go out," she explains. "I couldn't phone anyone and the only thing to eat was toast." What started out as a grim experience actually turned out well. She took stock of her current situation.

"I realised that I hadn't been on my own for months," she says, "and my whole life is more sorted now as a result of that weekend. I wrote a list of stuff to do. I've been through all my bills and bank statements, and now my room's tidy and my head's clear. It's weird, because when I used to come home I would go into someone else's room and irritate them. It never occurred to me to go into my own room and get

THIS STUDENT LIFE



EASTER BREAK, WEEK 15 AT THE MANCHESTER STUDENT HOUSE

on with things."

Tasha and Alistair have become really good friends. She came back from visiting her family and when she returned she found the blankly-

staring and essay-writing Alistair catatonic with boredom.

"He keeps trying to distract me. Now I'm really bored as well, because when you think about it, studying's not interesting, is it? He's getting through his essays, but it's taking twice as long."

Tasha's seriously thinking about changing her course. One of the life decisions she made during her lock-in was to apply to do law next year rather than stick to management. "I think that if you have any doubts about your degree by the third year you should change. Otherwise you'll regret it," she explains. "I'm looking at Manchester and London colleges, and if I don't get in at least I can say I tried."

So why law? Something to do with Ally McBeal, perhaps? Tasha scoffs. "Ally McBeal's a bit dizzy, but

I would love to have loads of money, cool clothes, go to bars, drink champagne and have business lunches..." But it's not the glamour which attracts her, rather the David and Goliath thing.

"I love it when little people win against big companies," she continues. "The more you can piss off massive companies, the better I like the idea of protecting someone's interests, but there are so many different areas you can go into with law and I want a degree that leads you to do what you really want. I'd love to be a barrister."

She's just taken on a rather low-key job. "I'm answering the phones at Yorkshire Electricity. It's in this huge building with loads of people on the phone, and I'm dealing with callers moaning on about their problems."

MANDELSON: THE BIOGRAPHY

The truth was 'out'. And so were the knives

Continued from page 1
Clapham was harmonious and happily domestic. Mandelson commanded the study he supposedly shared with Ashby, and would sometimes irritate Ashby and Robertson by breaking certain house rules: if he returned home early to find Jackie, the cleaner, still at work, he would divert her from her other duties to do his ironing.

The most dramatic event of Mandelson's first year in Clapham Manor Street was the birth of Peter Ashby's child.

Ashby had had an affair with a female colleague at the TUC;

they had gone on holiday together and she had unexpectedly become pregnant. Ashby was determined to take his full share of responsibility as a parent, and remained in close contact with her throughout the pregnancy. Mandelson reacted with utter calm; the pregnancy did nothing to damage his relationship with Ashby.

One Sunday evening in the summer of 1983, about a month before the baby was due and as

Ashby was sharing supper with Mandelson and Robertson, the mother-to-be came to the house for supper, anxious that she was about to give birth. Though her three friends were sceptical, they drove off to University College Hospital, where it rapidly became clear that the mother-to-be had been right. Within an hour or so the trio were inspecting the infant who was to play an important part in Mandelson's, as well as

times inhibited by Mandelson's Labour Party role. More crucial, however, were Ashby's anxieties about his son growing up with his father in a relationship with a man. Ashby is now married. All three friends remain on warm terms today.

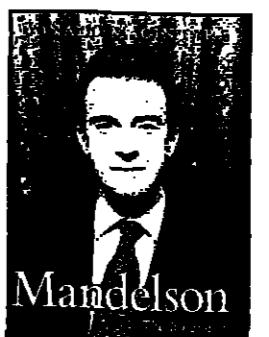
Mandelson believed that when on 27 October he was "outed" as a homosexual for the fourth or fifth time, this time by Matthew Parris, it was like a breach in the dam which had

hitherto protected him from a torrent of interest in his personal or "non-political" life. Because the baying media had not been placated by any admission about his sexuality, it had remained ravenous for another confession. Thus he became vulnerable to the exposure of what would otherwise have been a forgivable lapse. That was surely an underestimate of the controversy the loan would have caused, whatever the circumstances. But it would be baffling in hindsight, even to some of Mandelson's greatest sympathisers in Downing Street, that, while an infinitely more destructive nemesis was about to overtake him, so many man-hours had been deployed on the much less dangerous question of his sexuality – a matter of commendably little concern to the Prime Minister.

When he resigned, Ashby was in London, on a break from his

Japanese studies in Tokyo. When the Blairs invited Mandelson to join them for a family supper at Chequers that evening they suggested that he bring Ashby with him. Mandelson did, driving up in a borrowed car to Buckinghamshire. They had a drink, supper (breaking off to watch his resignation interviews on the television news), stayed the night, and returned to London around noon.

TOMORROW MANDELSON: THE EARLY YEARS



Mandelson

Inspired by 'Round the Horne', his older brother Miles nicknamed Peter

"Sir Osmold Smish, the Italian Mind-your-own-businessman". Miles said: "He was very independent, very self-sufficient. He didn't need his big brother to do anything for him."

MANDELSON'S PART IN THE COALITION THAT NEVER WAS

AT THE turn of the year

1995-6 Mandelson had been among those who attended a secret meeting at Lord Irvine's handsome house in north London. The Liberal Democrats were Ashdown, Lord Holme, Bob MacLennan, Archie Kirkwood and Menzies Campbell. On the Labour side, besides Donald Dewar, Mandelson and Irvine himself, were Tony Blair and Robin Cook. This was an interesting selection: the gathering was heavy with Scots; even more important, all the Labour participants were by now either open to, or outright enthusiasts for, electoral reform.

The encounter reached three conclusions. The first

cord was limited to two important elements, neither of them public. One was the electoral "non-aggression pact". The other was a private understanding that Blair would invite the Liberal Democrats into a coalition, not only in a hung parliament, but if he secured a "small overall majority" – accepted by the Liberal Democrats as anything up to around 50 seats. The Liberal Democrats wanted a written coalition agreement including, but not limited to, Commons electoral reform, to which Blair would now become personally committed – at the very least by promising to campaign for the conclusions of what was to become the Jenkins com-

mission. The Lib Dems would also require a commitment on education spending and the dropping of the second question in the Scottish devolution referendum on the new Edinburgh parliament's tax-raising powers. The Liberal Democrats would have minority representation at every level of government. The Labour team were talking of "two-plus" cabinet seats: the Liberal Democrats of "three-plus".

Ashdown and Menzies Campbell were the obvious candidates for Cabinet entry, but the Liberal Democrats argued that a place should be found for a third – probably the respected Lib Dem Deputy Leader Alan

Beith. The Labour landslide of 1 May, and the Liberal Democrats' own wholly unexpected tally of 46 seats, was an outcome neither Blair nor Ashdown had bargained for.

Shortly before noon on polling day, Ashdown spoke to Blair. At this point, the two leaders thought that a larger than expected majority might increase the possibility of Labour's "doing things" with the Liberal Democrats. Nevertheless, Ashdown said that if a coalition could not be made to work, a joint cabinet committee might be a possible substitute, and first stage, towards a wider agreement.

By the next morning,

however, Blair's mood ap-

peared to have changed. He

was still keen to emphasise his determination to move towards closer co-operation with the Liberal Democrats. But he was much less positive about the idea of coalition, at least in his first Cabinet. This was not such a disappointment to Ashdown. The scale of not only Labour's but the Lib Dems' electoral success had taken him aback. Indeed, the Labour landslide had given rise to some worrying thoughts in Ashdown's mind. Was a coalition what the British people had voted for? Nevertheless, there are grounds for thinking that Blair and Ashdown have since wondered whether they had not "missed a moment" on 2 May 1997.

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THE JOYS
MODERN LIFE

ADVERTISING SECTION

BY ROBERT WILSON

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW

20 APRIL 1999

£1.25

1000 WORDS

Their subjects are industrial landmarks – blast-furnaces, water towers, mineheads – photographed with integrity and objectivity. Through their works and teaching Bernhard and Hilla Becher have inspired a gifted generation of German artists. By **Jasor Oddie**

The New Unromantics

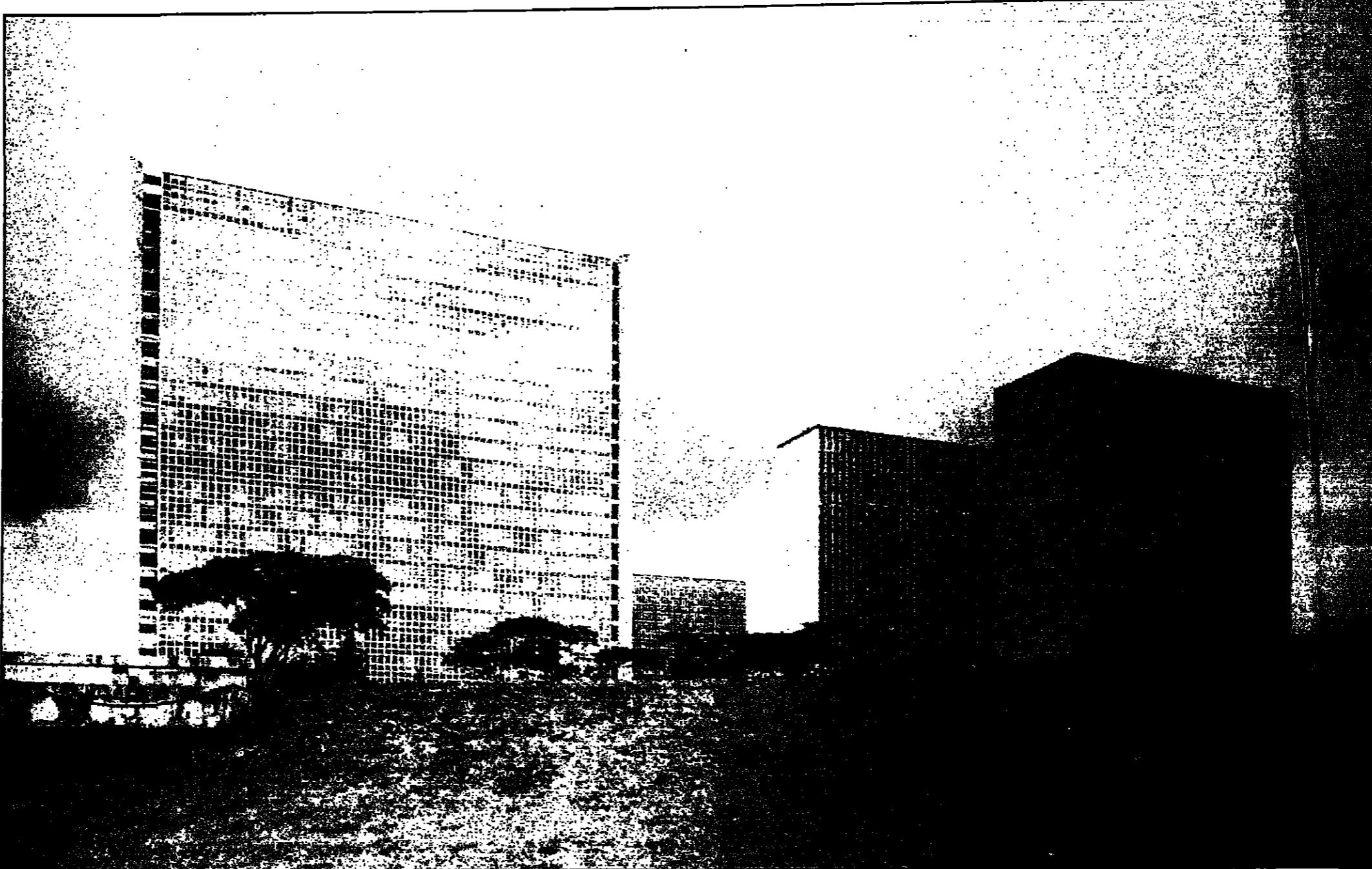
Back in 1988 the Johnen und Schöttle Gallery in Cologne put on an exhibition entitled Bernhard Becher's Students. It was a far-sighted show featuring six young German photographers, four of whom – Andreas Gursky, Thomas Struth, Thomas Ruff and Candida Höfer – have gone on to notable success. Bernhard Becher, who, together with his wife Hilla, is himself renowned for the photographic taxonomy of the industrial world he has spent the last three decades collating, has since retired from his teaching post at Düsseldorf's Kunsthochschule. He may no longer be grooming future generations of photographers, but the instrumental role that he, together with his wife and students, has played in transforming art photography from an inward-looking, ghetto-bound activity into one that is sought after by museums and galleries everywhere, cannot be underestimated.

A crude measure of their collective achievement can be seen in the number of exhibitions notched up between them. 1999 has already seen last year's Citibank prizewinner, Andreas Gursky, have a welcome if flawed one-man show at the Serpentine. The Bechers have just vacated Sheffield's Site Gallery. Both Struth and Ruff have recently had major retrospectives in Paris, and Jörg Sasse, another young Becher student (seen in the ICA's 1998 show *New Sightings*), is presently enjoying a second solo outing at New York's Lehmann Maupin Gallery. At any given time pieces by all of them can be found in group shows around the world, and later this month the Architectural Association is publishing a book to accompany an exhibition – *Reconstructing Space: Architecture in Recent German Photography* – that includes pictures by Becher and his wife, and work by 10 of his former students.

According to Becher, his was a hands-off approach, limited to telling his charges only what they should not do. He believes that those who went on to make names for themselves would have done so with or without him, as they arrived at the Akademie with strong ideas, strong personalities and a willingness to work. His modesty is sincere if not convincing, for it is a truism that the most promising pupils seek out the best teachers, understanding beforehand what they want to learn from their chosen masters. Besides, in the world of art photography the Bechers' reach has long stretched beyond the confines of Düsseldorf's campus.

In the early Fifties, when the Bechers were themselves students at the Kunsthochschule, they found themselves at odds with the dominant abstract expressionism. Even though a tradition of strictly objective photography had been established back in the Twenties by August Sander, Karl Blossfeldt and Albert Renger-Patzsch, the post-war climate in Germany favoured a solipsistic, subjective approach to art in general and to art photography in particular – perhaps a subconscious way of deferring any painful scrutiny of the country's recent past.

By contrast, the Bechers' approach to their subject matter was, right from the outset, unblinking and direct. Photo-



Brazilia - Banksektor Nord (1994) by Andreas Gursky, Bernhard Becher's most celebrated pupil

graphing those structures that caught their attention head on and under neutral, overcast skies so as to avoid any confusing shadows, their intention was to establish utterly legible typological surveys of the blast-furnaces, mineheads, water towers and other constructions that are part and parcel of industrial landscapes. Their powerful body of work has been linked to several movements, including minimalism and conceptual art.

It is the photographs taken by his one-time apprentices that bear the clearest stamp of the couple's influence. In Höfer's pregnant, institutional interiors, in Struth's deserted streets and in Ruff's unfinishing portraits, there is a methodological integrity that prohibits any subjective interference with what is being documented. It is the same integrity that is the overriding hallmark of the Bechers' output.

In 1976, the artist Lewis Baltz suggested that the ideal photographic document

would be one without author or art. Although the work of every one of these photographers is eminently recognisable, it is marked by a diminution of authorial presence that allows those things being photographed to speak for themselves. Yet paradoxically, because of the stillness of what is depicted, the subjects of their pictures also remain imperturbably mute and beyond description. The power of these austere, unromantic meditations on our world derives from their measured simplicity. Photography is fundamentally a recording device. In the hands of the Bechers and their students, whose various approaches are underpinned by a conceptual rigour that refuses both spectacle and pictorialism, it produces incontrovertible results that remind us of the ability of this medium to focus our attention on the facts.

Andreas Gursky's epic pictures of man

are perhaps the most incontrovertible of the lot. The images generated by his God's-eye view of urban spaces, stock-exchange floors and hotel atria, are startling to behold. But since 1992 this one-time Becher student has begun to manipulate his photographs digitally. "I subjugate the real situation to my artistic conception of the picture," he recently told an interviewer. Where once unadulterated reality held sway, we are now shown a version of it as conceived by Gursky. Such a didactic attitude is a long way from the subtle, Calvinist sensibilities of his mentors, who would never countenance any such imposition of an idea on to the object being photographed.

However, in this respect Gursky may be unique among the Becher students. Even the forthcoming Sasse's striking painterly creations, which at first glance would appear to be little more than expressions of subjective conceit, are in fact no such thing at all. For Sasse's quiet interest is in the

forgotten corners and overlooked elements of other people's snapshots. These he digitally enhances and blows up to a size that makes us take note of an incidental zone that normally inscribes itself only in the margins of our vision.

Yet if Gursky has on occasion chosen to represent reality differently from the Bechers, he still remains in their camp. Three of Bernhard's students have made a direct subject of their work. But while Höfer and Struth, with their pictures of crowded museums, remind us of its social function, it is Gursky, with his unexpected photographs of paintings, who enters more specifically into a dialogue with its history. It is significant that to date he has only twice photographed works of art, the first a trio of turners as they hang in the Tate Gallery, and the second, the same Jackson Pollock – *One, No. 31* – that Struth photographed four years before him at MoMA in New York. These paintings

exemplify a current that is the polar opposite to the straight photography practised by the Bechers and their inheritors. For Turner gave birth to a romantic and subjective vision that was to achieve its apotheosis nearly 150 years later in Pollock's abstract expressionist canvases. Another half-century on, Gursky has cast the dispassionate eye of the photographer in their direction. To borrow Marshall McLuhan's terminology, he has, by ring-ring these "hot" eruptions of subjectivity into the photographic frame, "cooled" them down. And in so doing he has continued the objective analysis of the world to which the Bechers have consecrated their lives

Reconstructing Space: Architecture in Recent German Photography is at the Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, London W1, from 20 April to 1 May, Mon-Fri 10am-7pm, Sat 10am-3pm. Admission free

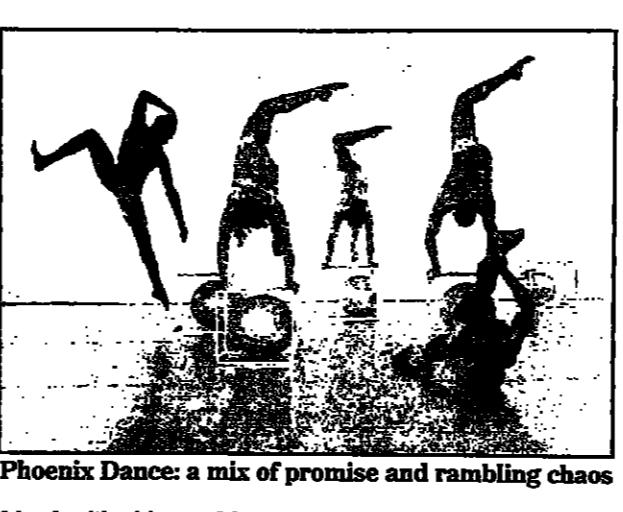
On a wing and a prayer

DANCE

PHOENIX DANCE
QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL
LONDON

IT COULD have been worse. Instead of sitting in the audience, I might have been one of the eight dancers wrenching my limbs into incoherent angles and spraying exhausted sweat with every pirouette. Or I might have been the soprano Eileen Hunter, standing at the back of the stage and adding irritating screeches to Tim Fleming's pretentiously grandiose music. I might even have been one of the bouncy beach balls that "symbolise passing energy and signify camaraderie between dancers" or an elastic ribbon "symbolising connection to their individual histories". Worst of all, I might have been the American choreographer, Dwight Rhoden, whose second piece this is for the all-black,

middle one, *The Last Word*, was an irritant, choreographed by the company's director, Thea Nerissa Barnes. She offers up a tedious couple squabbling far too long around and on a poncey stool with wheels about the stage. But Jonzi D's two girls in *Us Must Trust Us* are deftly and realistically drawn, part of his didactic agenda in presenting aspects of black society through gesture, dance and rap. What starts on a jolly note, with best friends swapping intimacies and jokes, and feeling enough trust to catch each other as they fall, darkens into suspicion and reprimand. One girl, who, it emerges, is pregnant by her friend's brother and wants an abortion, has burdened her



Phoenix Dance: a mix of promise and rambling chaos

friend with this confidence. Conflicting loyalties and anger now rips this friendship apart.

Cornered, by Andile Sotya

because of that, the most satisfying. The macho physiques of the performers, Gee Goodson and Hugh Davis, set us an intriguing contrast with their lithe, coiled grace and the sweetly soft music of the first section. I was gripped by the astonishing interplay of holds and smooth gymnastic movement. One man is lifted overhead by the other in a frozen running pose, or sits on the other's hands as he might in an airborne armchair. Yet the effect is never just empty dazzle. *Cornered* is a portrait of trust and togetherness as potent as Jonzi D's *Us Must Trust Us*, and with the added virtue of concision. This is the image of Phoenix that I hope will dominate its future.

NADINE MEISNER

Reality whipped into a delightful froth

THEATRE

MARTHA, JOSIE AND THE CHINESE ELVIS
OCTAGON THEATRE
BOLTON

THE AUDIENCE stood and cheered. How often, amid business plans and the drone of the audit, must regional theatre director's dream of reading such words. How pleasant then to be able to report from Lawrence Till's cash-strapped Octagon, which strives so hard to give its audience not just easy-listening theatre but breadth and challenge, that at the end of Charlotte Jones' new comedy last night the audience did so.

The successful, main-stage new play is the Holy Grail of contemporary theatre. What does *Martha, Josie and the*

vout Irish cleaning lady for whom the war against household dirt is but part of a wider vigilance requiring, for instance, memorising suspicious cars: "Those number plates spoke volumes to me". Defended by a battery of fics, imprecations to the Trinity, repeated counting from one to five, and dreams of pilgrimage to Lourdes and Graceland, she leaps instantly and originally to life. More of a problem is what to do with her. Subsequently, Martha repeats herself before, too predictably, she undergoes a liberating metamorphosis.

Development is the play's main difficulty as the plot advances in sudden lurches. The first is the discovery that the suburban semi that Martha bleaches and deodorises is a house of ill-repute, in that its mistress, Josie (Ann Rye), is a dominatrix, albeit semi-retired and with an artificial hip looming". Her one remaining "happy-man" as her daughter with "meaning difficulties" Brenda-Marie (Debra Penny), calls him, is Lionel Malcolm Hebdon's mildly melancholy dry-cleaner. It is he who organises a birthday party for

Josie with an Elvis impersonator as surprise guest – the timid Timothy Wong (Paul Courtenay Hyu). He does not organise the bigger surprise to Shelley-Louise, she remarks "that's the most I've ever said without a whip in my hand".

That mother and daughter might be reconciled; that Martha and Lionel might find each other; that Brenda-Marie and Timothy Wong might strike the rapport of the lonely can all be seen from afar. But the sentimentality is cut by the generous absurdity of charac-

ter and action, and sometimes by a skewering wit. When Josie ends the inevitable big speech to Shelley-Louise, she remarks "that's the most I've ever said without a whip in my hand".

This is not a casual joke. Earlier, Lionel has hymned Josie as the poet of the domination world, and in part the play is about the conjuring of fantasies by words. Although excessively frothy in places, it shows Jones to be an abundant wordsmith and imaginer.

JEFFREY WAINWRIGHT

Until 8 May, 01204 520661

A tale of two prodigies

CLASSICAL

HAE-JUNG KIM/
FREDDY KEMPF
WIGMORE HALL
LONDON

icism with a witty blues inflected number.

Born in 1977, Kempf is clearly an astonishing talent but he was ill-advised to start the evening with Beethoven's *Opus 111 Sonata* – the audience needs to be led up to such an intense and serious work – and he didn't fulfil the promise he showed in his noble, wisely controlled playing of the introduction. His balancing of harmonies in the Arietta was also a bit uneven.

He was fearless and capricious in Schuman's *Carnaval* – ardent in "Florestan", gaily flitting in "Coquette", and pleading in "Aveu". But adding extra notes to thicken the bass in the final March is a bad old habit, and even less forgivable in view of some of Kempf's sketchy chording.

The original version of Rachmaninov's *Second Sonata* hardly leaves room for editorial additions, and if Kempf didn't always give the most powerful passages their ideal brilliance and richness, his nonchalant melancholy in the quieter moments was seductive. Yet he didn't wallow in the slow movement and he made the whole work cohere as only a pianist with a big technique and real temperament can.

ADRIAN JACK



Wendy McMurdo's 'Solo Violin, St Mary's Music School, Edinburgh' (1998); top right, 'Vanished!' (1998) by Brian Catling and Tony Grisoni; bottom right: 'Wild Talents' (1997) by Susan Hiller

The call of the weird

Inexplicable, disturbing, hinting at odd possibilities: the paranormal and contemporary art have a lot in common. By Tom Lubbock

Imean, for god's sake, we're living in the 20th century. In traditional horror films, there was always a man who used to say that. He was the sceptic. He was sure such things couldn't happen now. He was always wrong.

If, in fact, there was one clear piece of advice horror films dimmed into their audiences, it was this: should a man ever tell you that we're living in the 20th century and that bogeys do not walk the earth, don't believe him: bogeys do. Well, maybe. But even if true, as a general tip it doesn't seem very useful. After all, for most of us, how often does the bogey-question arise?

Yet we live in a culture absolutely saturated with fictional and factual representations of the paranormal: movies, *The X-Files*, the Spooky World of Carol Vorderman and all that. A fascination, certainly. But what level of belief, what kind of belief does that imply? On the other hand, if few people really believe in it, but millions still lap it up, what does that mean? What needs are being answered? Might the fine arts help here?

"E.S.P. - Contemporary Artists Investigate the Paranormal" is a three-handed show at IKON in

Birmingham. Normally I'm very against thematic group-shows. But, as a theme for contemporary art, the paranormal is rare and curious enough to overcome the usual objections. Besides, one of the works here is a stunner: Susan Hiller's video installation, *Wild Talents*.

"Wild Talents" was the phrase coined by weirdness-researcher Charles Fort to describe human psychic abilities generally. He saw them as an untapped resource. Hiller's piece focuses on the supposed psychic powers of children in a darkened gallery: there are two huge, floor-to-ceiling screens, meeting where two walls meet, and projected on each of them is a series of clips from quite recent films, some famous, some not, each showing children in assorted acts of levitation, telekinesis and general hell-raising.

You'll catch a glimpse of *The Shining* (the sea of blood from the lift), and *Pottergeist* (when the little girl makes contact with the TV People), and *Carrie*, and from something which must be a biopic of Uri Geller. Bodies and objects fly, cups of cocoa boil over by themselves, and men catch fire. But the clips flash by fast, monochromed with single colour washes so they become almost a single film, your eye hav-

ing to flicker between the two screens, trying to take in both projections at once, the scary soundtracks having been sort of mulched together. You have a continuous, careering, not quite graspable reel of amazement.

The gallery literature seems to draw a media-studies moral from this – about the representation of children, and the way they're made out as either pure innocents or pure evil: quite off the mark, I think. The great coup here is that, released from their surrounding film plots, the clips move beyond good and evil, and beyond fact or fiction, into a realm of pure possibility – and the viewer does, too. The subject matter of the clips gets merged with the experience of them. You identify entirely with the children's powers. Watching this rolling sequence of fear and wonder is like being a child standing in a high wind, or a storm, or in the middle of a burning stable-field, overwhelmed and caught up by these forces, reverberating in them, feeling at one with them, and strangely in control of them. What *Wild Talents* offers is a very persuasive simulation – far better than its source movies – of what it would feel like to have such powers. It's got awe.

That seems to be the overall attitude to the paranormal in this show – as precisely that: the paranormal; the unexplained; a pure possibility of something bewilderingly other. *Vanished!*, an hour-long film by Brian Catling and Tony Grisoni, does that, dramatising, via talking heads, the "true" story of a family in the Thirties whose Manx home was visited by a strange, human-animal presence called Gef. ("Van-

ished!" is what it said when its visitors were over.)

Father, mother, and daughter each saw it, talked to it, and incorporated it into their lives. The press got interested for a while, but the story just peters out without climax, and you're left feeling that whatever you might say about it – hoax, collaborative fantasy, real haunting – is less interesting than the odd thing itself. Meanwhile, Wendy McMurdo's spry manipulated photos make children into false doubles of them-

selves, or have them playing musical instruments that have suddenly, mysteriously, vanished from their hands. No clues.

It's not a bad attitude. Most people interested in the unexplained are really interested in explanations – either supernatural or psycho-sociological. Most films have to reach a conclusion. But one can put explanation on hold, and I suppose the visual arts, with fewer narrative obligations, are well equipped to do this. "Yes, Trudi – we know you saw something." That's the other thing the men say. But to leave the matter exactly blankly, there, is a position that doesn't hear from too often.

At the National Portrait Gallery in London, there are more strange flickers and perplexing claims. The Painter's Eye is a small and rather confusing exhibition which displays the first results of an art-science experiment whose subject is the artist Humphrey Ocean. While making a series of portrait drawings, Ocean's gaze was monitored by an eye-tracker, and his brain was monitored by a brain-scanner, and a movement-sensor was attached to his pencil. Wall texts and video screens show what happened. The "mystery of the creative process" is somehow the object.

I'm not sure what the tests prove, or what they might prove. An experiment with but a single subject is clearly in its early days. There seem to be a vast number of ineliminable variables. The terminology is dubious. For instance, the one big result so far involves brain scans of Ocean doing one-minute drawings from photos, compared with those of unspecified "non-artists" doing the same task. They show that (surprisingly) Ocean used frontal, non-visual brain areas while the others used posterior visual brain areas.

The comment is that the non-artists were "slavishly copying" the photos, but Ocean "was thinking" the portraits". Hmm. The one-minute "slavish copies" aren't displayed, and I wonder if that's what we call them if we saw them. And what "thinking" means when you take the inverted commas away I don't know, but you notice that the experimenters don't use words like "formula" or "trick" or "style". And how far Ocean is a typical artist, and what "artist" is taken to mean, are obviously crucial questions, but hard to answer.

The whole project seems to rely on untestable judgements, viz that Ocean is a good artist, and quite a realistic one. Both are true. I think Ocean's easily the best portraitist the

NPG has commissioned in recent years (see his *Willie Whitelaw*), and he does good likenesses. But these two things together conform to the experimenters' preconception of the artistic process: that information goes in the brain, gets acted up a bit, and comes out as a picture.

They wouldn't have wanted an artist like Frank Auerbach, because his portraits don't retain enough hard information; and they wouldn't have wanted one of those hack pavement portraitists who ply their trade round the back of the NPG, because there would be no question of "creativity". The basic problem with this experiment is that it's in a dodgy relationship to normal, non-scientific ways of talking about art – wanting to move beyond them, but wholly dependent on them. I don't know if there is a "mystery of creativity", but probed this way there's bound to be.

'E.S.P. - Contemporary Artists Investigate the Paranormal', IKON Gallery, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1. To 13 June, closed Mondays; free admission. *The Painter's Eye National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2. To 13 June, everyday: free admission*

The secret life of milk and sliced bread

REVIEW

SHOP
HALES GALLERY
DEPTFORD
LONDON

little businesses pretending to be really big businesses, and you can tell that they are pretending. Arterial roads such as the A2 have died because no one can park there any more. The only ones that manage to cling on are the weird, mutant shops that sell everything at once." Most of the artists in Shop talk themselves up by listing their subsidiary products and services in an effort to pull in passing punters. "These are supermarkets on a very small scale," explains exhibition curator, Paul Hedge. "These are

discarded shopping lists which she paints up on a large scale using egg tempera – deliberately contrasting this time-consuming pre-Renaissance technique with today's throwaway society that sees old lists chucked to the ground after use.

"Two tins spoggi bollonasse [sic], Long loaf, 20 Birley blue", "creme fraiche, tarragon leaves", "corn beef, pot noodle, Susan soap" – these strangely intimate lists conjure up their absent owners and are punctuated with attention-grabbing lines such as "Long live the king" and "Tell Jack to ring prison for onions". Whether scribbled on backs of envelopes, tiny scraps of paper, or written out meticulously, the lists make fascinating portraits, by turn funny, touching and bemusing.

The Old Kent Road, once a

Roman road and now the Dome road, has been recreated with nothing more than chopped-up cardboard boxes, but to dramatic effect by Jane Wilbraham. Files of brightly coloured letters run in a horizontal strip along the length of the gallery. When they are read from above, "fishpiechickenkebabordnolensompira tevideomayflower", the road's landscape comes to life as the shops pub and businesses each get a mention by turn. Stand back from the work, which is placed a couple of feet from the ground, and the shadow cast by the letters forms itself into an inverse urban skyline.

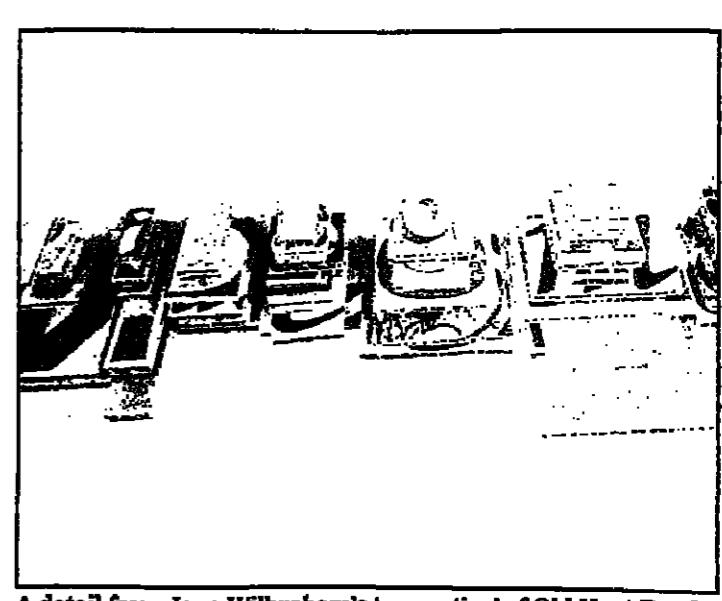
In contrast to the local artists, New York-based Jill Henderson has chosen to look at the shopping malls of the future, as is typical of her work, presenting images of aspirations run riot. Her ramshackle,

scratches pen-and-ink visions have a cartoon, sci-fi quality that takes the future of consumerism to a ludicrous extreme. Henderson's far-fetched, fantasy shopping malls appear as misshapen bulbous pods, perched on skyscrapers, or are seen clinging, precariously to their sides, linked by narrow tubes that are more suited to energetic gerbils than gravity-bound humans.

Outside the gallery, Deptford market is in full swing: stalls, grocery stores and backs of lorries all laden high in an area teaming with upbeat shop signs, hidden shopping lists and ambitious business aspirations. Surely, some things, however packaged, will never change.

KATE MIKAIL

70 Deptford High Street, London SE8 (0181-694 1194), until 14 May



A detail from Jane Wilbraham's 'recreation' of Old Kent Road

MEDIA

Will the BBC pick an outsider?

The first shots have been fired as candidates to take over as BBC director-general take their positions. By Paul McCann

If you want to be the next director-general of the BBC, you're too late. The first interviews began last week and, more importantly, at the weekend the first serious knocking copy about candidates started to appear. If no one has started knocking down your chances yet, it is probably too late to believe that the head-hunters are about to give you a call.

The process of shooting down the front-runner began in Saturday's *Times* with a piece meant to see off the chances of Greg Dyke, the cockney chairman of Pearson Television, and, significantly, the friend and supporter of the Prime Minister.

The Times revealed that Mr Dyke has made donations amounting to £50,000 to the Labour Party over the past five years and implied that a cronyism scandal would erupt if he were to get the job. The BBC is planning a strongly worded letter to *The Times* protesting its independence from government. Despite the fact that we have government by control freaks, and that everyone from Alastair Campbell to Charlie Whelan has claimed in recent months that they can influence who gets the job, the BBC insists its governors do the selecting, not ministers.

The attack on Dyke was timed to coincide with the first interviews being held by the governors' selection panel. This panel of four comprises the chairman Sir Christopher Bland, the vice-chairman Baroness Young, one of the three regional governors who represent Scotland, Northern Ireland or Wales, and one of the governors with a financial background – probably Sir David Scholey, who is an adviser to the merchant bank Warburg.

For a neat rebuttal to allegations of Labour cronyism it wouldn't hurt if it also includes the governor Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, a former senior civil servant at the Foreign Office under successive Tory foreign secretaries.

The governors' selection panel will be interviewing those who have reached them through head-hunters employed by the BBC for the first time. The use of head-hunters is noteworthy in itself.

First, it means the BBC has caught up with modern business practice and realised that it is inappropriate for a personnel director to be responsible for the selection of their future boss. It is also an attempt to achieve greater accountability. This accounts for the placing of a job ad in a number of newspapers.

But, importantly, it is also a mark of the very strong field of candidates who this time come from outside the



MATTHEW BANNISTER 20-1

Since becoming extremely unpopular in the process of shaking up Radio 1, Bannister, 42, has moved on to become director of BBC Radio and currently chief executive BBC Production. One of Sir John Birt's favourite sons, but has only spent only six months in television.

MARK BYFORD 4-1

Rapidly emerging as a leading internal candidate. A mere 40, he is currently chief executive of BBC World Service, and recently had to defend himself against allegations by John Tuse that he had allowed damaging cuts to the service (this could count in his favour).

GREG DYKE 7-2 FAV

At risk of becoming known as the cronyism candidate. Chairman of Pearson Television which owns a chunk of Channel 5, Dyke, 51, has a wealth of TV experience as a former MD of LWT and editor in chief of TV-am. Not really a programme maker, say his critics.

DAVID ELSTEIN 16-1

Currently chief executive of Channel 5, described as "tacky" by the ITC. Should not be judged solely on Channel 5's faltering beginnings. The 54-year-old former director of programmes at BSkyB has proved himself as a smart scheduler and astute thinker.



RICHARD EYRE 10-1

Currently chief executive of ITV, he would not be the first director-general to have crossed the floor (John Birt was an LWT man). Eyre, 44, was the first media director of agency Bartle Bogle Hegarty before becoming group managing director of Capital Radio.

TONY HALL 5-1

The candidate with by far the most journalistic experience. Was deputy editor of the Nine O'Clock News at 34 and later editor of News and Current Affairs Television. Now 48, he has joined the BBC board of management. Set up Radio 5 Live and News 24.

PATRICIA HODGSON 16-1

The only woman in the race, she would also be the first female DG. The corporation's director of policy and planning, 52, is a fervent defender of the licence fee. But she has a past. She was a Tory activist. This is unlikely to help her get into the hotseat.

ALAN YENTOB 9-2

Recently declared BBC should not be concerned with ratings – several years too late, but at least he's saying it, and making a pitch to be champion of the integrity of public service broadcasting. Former controller of BBC2 then BBC1, now, at 52, director of BBC Television.

BBC. Not in living memory have the internal candidates had such a serious chance of losing to an outsider. Once the selection committee has whittled the applicants down to a manageable few, all-day interviews will be held in front of all 12 governors. Almost certain to get to this stage are the front-runners Dyke, Alan Yentob, director of BBC Television, and Mark Byford, chief executive of BBC World Service.

At this stage the BBC's love of continuity may become a more powerful force than anything that can be wielded by the Labour Party.

When Birt was in 1992 he had been deputy director-general for five years and had no serious competition. In 1987, Checkland himself was deputy to the ousted Alasdair Milne, and so he defeated more glittering names such as Michael Grade, Jerry Isaacs and Jonathan Dimbleby.

Checkland succeeded because he raised the fewest objections from the largest number of governors. So it is here that Dyke's high-profile career outside the BBC may play against him, and into the hands of much more low-key candidates such as Byford.

The problem in forecasting the identity of the new director-general is that there seems to be no

berent strategy coming from the governors about what they see as being the BBC's future.

A commitment to the licence fee is about all they have been prepared to support publicly. As a result, David Elstein, chief executive of Channel 5 and a long-odds outsider for the post, has had to switch from opposing the licence fee to supporting its retention.

One skill that everyone agrees the

next director-general ought to have is that of communication. Even Birt's admirers admit he alienated large numbers of BBC staff, not just because of his job cuts and casualisation of the workforce, but because of his penchant for management speak, which grated on an organisation proud of its creativity. Quite simply, he never communicated what he was trying to do. This

should be a strike in favour of Greg Dyke's connections with the Government could be seen as an ideal qualification for both battles.

Yet, internally, senior BBC executives are keen to remind outsiders that the director-general's job is one of two halves: one half chief executive and one half editor-in-chief. Greg Dyke, who moved into management after only a few years as a journalist, will find his future will depend less on how badly the governors feel they need an editor-in-chief.

THE WORD ON THE STREET

THE MIRROR'S Piers Morgan is gracious in victory. "I feel truly humbled," he says, at the news that his paper has won a poll of its own readers to become "newspaper of the year". The victory, he admits, was hardly a surprise, after Saturday's *Mirror*, which asked readers to phone for the favourite newspaper, gave a slightly skewed description of its rivals.

According to the *Mirror*, The Independent wins lots of awards even though no one reads it outside Islington; The Guardian staff have to wear sandals and John Lennon glasses; The Financial Times has a secret motto, "If it's tedious we'll do yards on it"; and The Sun is "edited by an alien". "I intend to put 'newspaper of the year' across the masthead," maintains the increasingly loopy Morgan. He claims the fact that 30 per cent of his own readers voted for other newspapers was down to The Guardian's editor Alan Rusbridger "sitting at home hitting his radial button".

"Yes, I know I've lost the plot," he admits, "but it'll get up everyone's nose."

THE DAILY STAR'S editor Peter Hill is clearly smirking under the news that when Chris Evans was planning to buy his paper he was also planning to replace him with the ex-FHM editor Mike Soutar. That, at least, is the explanation being offered inside the *Star* for an



prompted Downing Street to order Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's personal spin doctor, to Brussels for a radical overhaul of Nato's press operation. In Brussels, Mr Campbell discovered to his horror that Jamie Shea the Nato spokesman, was running his press office with a skeleton team of one. Campbell said Mr Shea had done a "brilliant" job, but needed to have his team strengthened. Accordingly, Julian Braithwaite has been seconded to Mr Shea from No 10 for the duration.

Since Mr Campbell's arrival there has been better co-ordination of Nato's message that whoever is killed in Kosovo, the blame lies with Milosevic. One of Mr Campbell's strongest weapons in elections was the use of his rebuttal squad. It is likely that we shall soon see Nato start to unleash rebuttals as part of its media offensive.

PETER MANDELSON has obviously buried the hatchet with Lord Hollick after the *Sunday Express* interview with his Brazilian friend. The two were seen going off to lunch together from Ludgate House last week. Hollick has been busy making friends. *Sunday Business*, the Barclay brothers' title, is getting space vacated by Star journalists at Blackfriars so that its reporters don't have to schlep back to Docklands after lunch. Express Newspapers' need to sublet space while *Sunday Business* expands is a clear indication of which way the wind is blowing in Fleet Street.

NATO'S SHAMBOLIC handling of last week's air strike on a refugee column has

THE Nato bombing of Yugoslavia began only a week before the end of March, so it is still too early to say what the true impact of the conflict has been on newspaper sales.

Nevertheless some trends are emerging. The broadsheet dailies have had a better month than the popular market, while in the Sunday market only *The Independent* on Sunday and the *News of the World* managed to increase sales compared with February.

When Diana, Princess of Wales died, quality newspapers did better than tabloids, and some pundits believed that this phenomenon was owed to a rejection of the popular press by the public because of the manner of Diana's death.

However, others saw it as a natural trading up by newspaper readers at the time of a big event – they simply wanted more information and a different type of news presentation.

Early indications from the Yugoslavia conflict may show this happening again. The BBC's news is attracting bigger ratings than ITV, so to make a crude comparison, broadsheets may also benefit.

This effect will be exaggerated if a ground war begins and Nato forces start to suffer casualties. Many readers will not want their serious war coverage sharing pages with the latest soap star's love life.

As the conflict has progressed there has been a blurring of newspapers' editorial lines on the rights and wrongs of Nato involvement – the refugee crisis has moved the debate on to tactics and the need for ground forces. Although opinion pages were more divided in the first week – the week covered by March's figures – those opinions seem to have had little effect on sales. *The Express*, which was highly supportive of the Government and Nato, is down month on month by 0.5 per cent whereas the *Daily Mail*, which has been much more critical, continued its relentless rise, up 0.67 per cent.

ANALYSIS

PAUL McCANN

March – it was up 3.1 per cent for the month and had its first year-on-year sales increase for 30 months – this makes David Yelland look like a genius who can put on sales while raising the price of his paper. In fact the price increase helped fund an estimated spend of £14m on promotional give-aways and regional price cuts in the first three months of last year. Although *90p is The Sun's headline price*, it has been on sale in Scotland for 10p, and has also been sold at a discount in Northern Ireland and in the Central ITV region of England. This has been combined with its "millionaires" game and the books for schools promotion.

The Guardian seems to have recovered after its six-month period of weakness in the second half of last year. It is back to hovering around 400,000 copies a day.

The slight redesign the paper unveiled yesterday is regarded as an attempt to safeguard that stability, rather than an effort to put on new sales.

Its sister paper *The Observer*, at 401,403, has fallen two months in a row from an advertising-supported high of 419,000 in January. As with *The Guardian*, stability is defined as around 400,000 copies.

Slightly more fraught must be the conversations at *The Sunday Telegraph*. Quietly, and without anyone noticing, Dominic Lawson's paper has dropped 50,000 sales a week since the beginning of last year. No Sunday broadsheet has picked up that many buyers, so we must assume that Lawson's paper has been funding the growth of the *Mail on Sunday*, up 70,000 in the same period.

The Times and *The Sunday Telegraph* have been the sales successes of the Nineties, wooing readers with price cuts and subscriptions offers. Now that those "bought" readers are seriously leaving away, a serious news story may have come just in the nick of time.

Daily newspapers	February 1999	March 1999	% change
<i>The Mirror</i>	2,301,499	2,303,510	+0.09
<i>Daily Star</i>	534,704	514,680	-3.74
<i>The Sun</i>	3,698,805	3,813,381	+3.10
<i>The Express</i>	1,091,790	1,085,550	-0.57
<i>Daily Mail</i>	2,346,502	2,362,184	+0.67
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	1,043,653	1,045,336	+0.16
<i>Guardian</i>	400,600	402,494	+0.47
<i>Independent</i>	220,203	224,306	+1.86
<i>Times</i>	755,359	746,403	-1.19
Sunday newspapers			
<i>News of the World</i>	4,296,654	4,313,582	+0.39
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	1,985,075	1,933,074	-2.62
<i>Sunday People</i>	1,662,080	1,620,105	-2.53
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	2,326,195	2,319,272	-0.30
<i>Express on Sunday</i>	1,010,122	1,005,926	-0.42
<i>Independent on Sunday</i>	252,105	255,982	+1.54
<i>Observer</i>	406,937	401,403	-1.36
<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	816,978	808,826	-1.00
<i>Sunday Times</i>	1,377,297	1,366,464	-0.79

EUROPEAN

Monotype

77

THE TUESDAY REVIEW
The Independent 20 April 1999

there's money to
Crisis
faith
ad la

There's money to be made from religious imagery, but when does the clever use of icons become blasphemous? By Clare Garner

Crisis of faith in ad land

By Paul McCann

Copywriters looking for an easy short cut to fix a message in consumers' minds have been happily borrowing sacred images. Instant iconography is the advertising industry's stock in trade, and they can count on a strong reaction to an image such as a bishop smoking a spliff or a woman nailed to a cross. Sacred imagery has been used to sell products as various as watches, luggage, stationery, tyres and jeans.

However, campaigns with a religious theme are increasingly falling foul of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), prompting more complaints from the public than any other style of advertisement.

Last month, Paramount TV withdrew its promotional advertisements for the comedy show *Drop the Dead Donkey*. The image of a donkey's head on the Turin shroud, accompanied by the slogan "Resurrected", provoked 182 complaints to the ASA. Heineken also recently pulled an ad that showed a Nativity scene and the headline "It's a girl".

Now a Catholic newspaper, *The Universe*, has launched a campaign to end the use of images that mock Christ. The latest example is Pirelli's current campaign showing the Brazilian footballer Ronaldo adopting the Christ-like pose of Rio de Janeiro's statue of Jesus. The posters have so far prompted 24 complaints, but the ASA is yet to adjudicate. *The Universe* is urging readers to lodge complaints with the authority about this or any other "blasphemous" advertisement.

"Some people say we should get a life," ran last week's editorial in *The Universe*. "Others say that if we were really confident about our faith, we should be able to laugh at ourselves... But is it too much to expect a little decency and respect for our beliefs? It is very easy to turn the other cheek when we are insulted, but that's very different from rolling over every time some heating wants to make a mockery out of 2,000 years of our history."

Last year, the public made 699 complaints to the ASA about 69 ads in which religion was seen to be treated disrespectfully. "In the past, it was only in the run-up to Christmas that advertising agencies made mileage out of religion, but now the trend seems to be year-round," says the ASA's Steve Ballinger.

Three of the top 10 most complained about advertisements last year mocked Christianity in a way "likely to cause serious or widespread offence", according to the ASA. These included an ad for "Heavenly Bodies", a photographic series in *The Sunday Times Magazine* featuring a photo by Terry O'Neill of a bikini-clad Raquel Welch tied to a wooden cross. It prompted 142 complaints from those who felt it was blasphemous to Christians. The advertisers claimed it was important to understand that the photo reflected O'Neill's view that the Sixties was a decade that "crucified" the ideal of womanhood because it valued women only for their sexuality. But the ASA upheld the complaints, saying that most readers would be unaware of the motivation behind the picture.



POWER IS NOTHING WITHOUT CONTROL. PIRELLI

Picture imperfect - above: Ronaldo's controversial campaign for Pirelli; below left: Diesel's 'unacceptable' jeans promotion; below right: the ad dropped by Heineken

The ASA received 95 complaints for an ad for Diesel jeans showing four young women dressed as nuns from the waist up, wearing jeans and holding rosaries. Behind them was a statue of the Virgin Mary, also wearing jeans. The caption said: "Pure virgin 100 per cent cotton. Soft yet miraculously strong..." The ASA ruled that it was unacceptable to depict nuns as sexual beings. Independent research carried out last year for the ASA shows that feelings run high when it comes to religious references in advertising. Eighty per cent of those questioned said that disrespectful references to any religion should never be allowed. Many said they feared that Christianity was too often the butt of jokes, but the majority said that ads using gentle humour or mild religious references were acceptable. Mr Ballinger comments: "The ASA are not killjoys and we're not saying that using religion in a humorous way is a problem. However, when advertisers go too far and refer to religion disrespectfully, we have to

reflect the sensitivities of those who will find this offensive."

Dave Trott, creative director at Walsh, Trott, Chick and Smith, cannot see a problem with using religious imagery, provided that the reference is witty. "Dawn French put it best for me when she said: 'If it's funny, it is not bad taste, and if it's bad taste, it's not funny.' That's generally how I operate. I don't see why everything has to be tasteful. Our job isn't to make the public always like what we do."

Diesel's numbing advertisement "worked" in Mr Trott's view. "We don't want to go back to the days when we wouldn't do things just because it would offend some grumpy colonel in Sevenoaks. If you've got this all-powerful being which is supposed to be able to protect everybody for all eternity, why does it need to be protected by a couple of dopey human beings?"

Among the complaints upheld last year by the ASA were those relating to a Watches of Switzerland advertisement which used a picture

of a bishop smoking a spliff with the caption: "Good heavens! Isn't that a Baume & Mercier Hampton?" Last week an advertisement carrying the headline "Jesus Was a Vegetarian", alongside a portrait of Jesus with an orange slice as a halo, was displayed on a billboard in Amarillo, Texas. It caused an outcry and was removed within three days.

The record number of complaints received by the ASA for a single advert - 1,192 - came in 1995, when a leaflet for the British Safety Council showed a picture of Pope John Paul II in a safety helmet, with the slogan: "Eleventh Commandment: Thou shall always wear a condom." Rupert Howell, chairman of HHCL & Partners, believes that while advertisers must strike a "fine balance", religion should not be off-limits. "There's a bit of me that feels that the fact that we can be relaxed and lighthearted about our national religion is a sign of sophistication and development," he says. "The power of Jesus Christ has survived 2,000 years of turbulence. I think it can survive a Heineken poster."

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Editor

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Watchdog without teeth

The solicitors' regulatory body is ineffective, slow – and under threat. By Robert Verkaik

The Law Society and its under-performing watchdog, the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors (OSS), has less than three months to get to grips with a rising tide in the number of complaints brought against the profession. If the tide does not ebb by the time Ann Abraham, the Legal Services Ombudsman, publishes her report in June, solicitors may lose the right to regulate themselves and the OSS will be washed away. This was the thrust of Geoff Hoon's speech in the House of Commons last week when he introduced the second reading of the Access to Justice Bill.

Mr Hoon, the minister of state at the Lord Chancellor's Department, told the Commons that he thought the OSS was clearly failing, adding that Ms Abraham's report would confirm this. Firing an explicit warning shot across the Law Society's bows, he said: "We will not tolerate unjustified restrictive practices." Mr Hoon added: "It (the OSS) was set up in 1996 to deal with complaints of inadequate professional service, and of serious misconduct by solicitors. The Office is the most recent attempt by the Law Society to get their complaints system right. It replaced the Solicitors Complaints Bureau. Yet like previous attempts it has not delivered sustained improvement. There is a good deal of concern on both sides of the House."

Today's report by the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors is expected to show that the crisis at the OSS is deepening. Currently there are 9,000 complaints outstanding and there is a six-month backlog of new cases. Complaints are growing by nearly 100 a week. Last year 31,672 members of the public complained about their solicitor, compared with 23,453 in 1996.

It is understood that a number of back-bench MPs, led by the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, angry at persistent complaints made by their constituents, have put pressure on the Lord Chancellor's Department to act.

A proposed amendment to the Bill includes provision to establish a new watchdog that would erode or even end self-regulation of the profession.



Flooding in the Stratford area waterlogged the OSS offices causing £1.5m worth of damage AP

It is understood that one option being considered is to enhance the powers of Ann Abraham to oversee the work of the OSS. The Legal Services Ombudsman will set new targets for the OSS and make recommendations for complaints-handling systems.

Mr Hoon is concerned that the decisions against solicitors made by Ms Abraham were being ignored by solicitors. "In future she will have the option of making binding determinations that have to be paid by the lawyers in default," said Mr Hoon. The Government made it clear that it would hold most of these powers in reserve until, or if, the Law Society showed it could not put its own house in order. The OSS is expected to counter today that it has not been given enough funding to keep

up with the complaints, and that solicitors themselves should do more to put matters right at an early stage.

While complaints have risen steadily in the last three years, staffing levels have remained almost static. The situation was not helped last year when large numbers of complainants' files were waterlogged following the flooding of the river Lea in Warwickshire and a new computer system installed to speed up complaints handling was damaged. The damage is estimated to have cost the OSS £1.5m.

However, the Law Society's president, Michael Mathews, says that only a tiny fraction of cases result in a complaint: of 15 million legal transactions each year only 1,000 cause trouble. The Society has already com-

mitted £500,000 to the OSS for temporary staff to clear the backlog. Says Mr Mathews: "Steps are already being taken to deal with delays... We have commissioned the management consultants Ernst & Young to give an independent review of our complaints handling procedures." He says the Society will now work with the Legal Services Ombudsman and the National Consumer Council to find a solution.

Nonetheless, this cannot disguise the fact that complaints are breaking new records. Between 1997 and February 1998, the OSS received 3,000 a month, an increase of 30 per cent. And Ann Abraham's report last June found that complaints now averaged one for every three practising solicitors.

The situation is greatly exacer-

bated by the mentality of some solicitors. Last year Ms Abraham was in correspondence with one who tried to argue that he was not a solicitor at all. In what amounted to a desperate attempt to escape a ruling made against him by the Ombudsman, the solicitor tried to prove that for the purposes of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 he was not a solicitor and therefore outside the jurisdiction of the Legal Services Ombudsman. "This," points out Ms Abraham, "is an extraordinary example of defensiveness. He must have spent many hours coming up with this one. But frankly, if he had just written a cheque [to compensate the client] that would have saved us all a lot of time." The case itself was remarkably trivial. The solicitor had demanded payment from a customer for the trouble of going through his files. Ms Abraham says: "Those sort of examples may mean that I and the Government and opinion-formers lose patience with the profession, and self-regulation starts to look a bit shaky."

On this assessment the writing may already be on the wall for the OSS. Nevertheless, Mr Hoon did have some good news for the profession. Mr Hoon committed the Government to overturning a vote in the House of Lords to allow all properly qualified lawyers greater rights of audience. He said that, after six years of debate, consultation and advice, only a very small package of additional rights was given to employed solicitors.

A further boost was new powers to crack down on lawyers involved in possible fraud. The Government is now expected to announce a range of powers that will include the right to allow the OSS to raid solicitors' premises and search files. Currently the OSS can conduct raids only on a specific suspicion that a solicitor has stolen or misappropriated a client's money.

The Law Society has been pressing the Government to give it greater powers to intervene in solicitors' practices on a general suspicion of wrongdoing. The powers also include an increase in fines against solicitors who fail to deal adequately with customers' complaints. The question many solicitors must be asking themselves is: is this all too little and all too late?

IN BRIEF

A JUROR'S ill-timed cough nearly cost an innocent man his liberty last week. The defendant Alan Rashid, 32, was jailed by mistake when a juror coughed as the verdict was read out.

The foreman of the jury said "Not Guilty" – but a juror's cough drowned out the word "not". Mr Rashid stood dismayed in the dock as the judge jailed him for two years for making a threat to kill.

He was taken down to the court cells to wait for the prison van. Judge Michael Gibbon thanked the jury at Cardiff Crown Court for their efforts during the two-day trial and released them. But on leaving the courtroom, one of the jurors asked an usher why Mr Rashid was given two years after being found not guilty.

The official realised there had been a mistake and called everyone back to court. A very confused Mr Rashid was led back into the dock and told there had been a mistake.

LAWYERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

are expecting some pain and suffering on 26 April – dawn of the Woolfian era. Ill-prepared litigators can expect harsh treatment from judges who will refuse all excuses beginning: "I left my claims form at home." For the disorganized lawyer who fears the worst, the answer may lie in Birmingham, where, on 26 April, personal injury lawyers are holding a seminar entitled "chronic pain and its management" – certainly an apt euphemism for the Woolf reforms.

A SOLICITOR from Northampton wants to know whether the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and

his wife are running a nice little earner in the conference marketing business. It is understood that Cherie Booth has been instrumental in persuading Hillary Clinton to cross the water to read out.

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SOME LAWYERS' drafting skills leave a lot to be desired. But no one deserves the punishment meted out to one of the defence team representing

Anwar Ibrahim, the former deputy prime minister of Malaysia. He received six years' imprisonment for alleged corruption, but his lawyer was given a three-month sentence for drafting an affidavit that made allegations about the conduct of the prosecution. With considerable understatement, Charles Fint QC, of the bar Human Rights Committee, said: "The ability of members of the Malaysian Bar to conduct the defence of accused persons has been seriously prejudiced."

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NEW FILMS

ACTRESSES (15, 88 mins)

Director: Ventura Pons
Starring: Rosa María Sarda, Nuria Espert
Cult Spanish director Pons rustles up a googly-eyed bit of cinematic navel-gazing in this ode to the acting lark. Shot back in 1997 (before last year's art-house hit, *Carsesos*), *Actresses* details the earnest research of Merce Pons' aspiring thespian – interviewing three diverse old hands (Rosa María Sarda, Nuria Espert, Anna Lizaran) about their life and times in the greasepaint trade. Part acting masterclass, part loquacious reminiscence, *Actresses* slowly stews in an ambience of oppressive theatricality. Its performers talk as if they're being paid by the word. *Repertory: ICA Cinema*

HAPPINESS (18, 134 mins)

Director: Todd Solondz
Starring: Evan Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Renoir, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, Screen on the Hill, Virgin Haymarket

AN IDEAL HUSBAND (PG, 100 mins)

Director: Oliver Parker
Starring: Cate Blanchett, Minnie Driver
Stuffied-shirt politico Sir Robert Chiltern (Jeremy Northam) is being held to ransom by Julianne Moore's brittle blackmailer. Wife Cate Blanchett looks on in horror, while louche Rupert Everett and effervescent Minnie Driver provide the comic relief. And so it goes. Oliver Parker's film is a proficient but oddly mechanical overhaul of Oscar Wilde's still-pertinent satire of middle-class hypocrisies – the friction between the public and private sphere. The sharp dialogue is rather blurred by the snappy editing and sumptuous design, but bright playing from a starry cast helps to paper over the cracks. *West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

Picture House, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, The Tricycle Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road And local cinemas

PROMETHEUS (15, 130 mins)

Director: Tony Harrison
Starring: Michael Feast, Walter Sparrow
Tony Harrison's dense and literate film-poem kicks off with a visit from Hermes (Michael Feast) to a depressed mining town in Yorkshire, before moseying off through the smoketastic landscapes of polluted Eastern Europe. Harrison's rigorous, locomotive verse stokes an awkward and overclogged narrative updating Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* into life, but it's still too long, too ill-paced, too heavy handed in its eco-conscious message. Two hours in, and those rhyming couples start to grate (*right*). *West End: Notting Hill Coronet*

RETURN TO PARADISE (15, 109 mins)

Director: Joseph Ruben
Starring: Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Joaquin Phoenix, David Conrad
Eden takes on a definite whiff of sulphur in the course of Joseph Ruben's fact-based saga, as two strutting graduate travellers (Vince Vaughn and David Conrad) are impelled to return to the scene of their former crimes when an erstwhile buddy (Joaquin Phoenix) is busted for drug possession in Malaysia. A classic morality play in the "what would you do?" mould, *Return to Paradise* still conspires to bungle its ready-made drama. Opening out as a taut marriage of *Midnight Express* and *The Beach*, its inherent tension seeps away throughout a pedestrian second half. A love angle between Vaughn and Anne Heche's earnest defence lawyer looks tacked on as an afterthought. *West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

Xan Brooks

GENERAL RELEASE

AMERICAN HISTORY X (18, 117 mins)

American History X is a liberal essay on right-wing fanaticism which nonetheless indulges in some dubious Nazi chic. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

ARLINGTON ROAD (15, 117 mins)

Mark Pellington's intriguingly staged paranoia thriller stars Jeff Bridges and Tim Robbins. *West End: Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

AN AUTUMN TALE (U, 111 mins)

The final part of Eric Rohmer's *Tales of the Four Seasons* is airy elegiac and as warm as sunshine. *West End: Curzon Cinema, Renoir*

BEDROOMS AND HALLWAYS (15, 96 mins)

Plunkett and MacLean (Robert Carlyle and Jonny Lee Miller) are rakish Dick Turpins cutting a dash through 18th-century society. Instead of a decent plot, director Jake Scott offers noise, colour and virtuous pop-promo visuals. *West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Rd. Repertory: The Pullman Everyman*

BLAST FROM THE PAST (12, 111 mins)

Hugh Wilson's workmanlike Cold War satire starring Brendan Fraser. *West End: Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

CENTRAL STATION (15, 110 mins)

Central Station trails Fernanda Montenegro's retired schoolteacher and her abandoned nine-year-old charge on a hunt through the backlands of Sertao for the boy's missing father. *West End: Curzon Mayfair, Ritzy Cinema*

A CIVIL ACTION (15, 115 mins)

John Travolta's ambulance-chasing lawyer takes a shot at redemption in this complex and frequently absorbing courtroom saga. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

THE FACULTY (15, 104 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End And local cinemas*

GODS AND MONSTERS (15, 105 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Curzon Soho, Metro, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema, Watermans Arts Centre*

HIGH ART (18, 102 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema*

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (PG, 114 mins)

Roberto Benigni's Oscar-winning comedy about fascist Italy and the death-camps. *West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

MIGHTY JOE (PG, 114 mins)

This children's comedy is disposable Disney fluff, yet it boasts a ready charm that's hard to dislike. *West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon West End, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas*

NÓ (15, 85 mins)

Robert Lepage's third feature obliquely spotlights Quebec's push for independence in 1970 with an absurdist parallel that crossescut between the trials of a troubled actress and her activist boyfriend. But its fascinating elements fail to get its scenes unravel; its reach exceeds its grasp. *West End: ABC Swiss Centre*

PAYBACK (18, 110 mins)

Based on the source novel that inspired John Boorman's *Pontypool*, this rumbling revenge thriller sends its double-crossed and left-for-dead hero (Mel Gibson) on a mission to get even. *West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

PLUNKETT AND MACLEAN (15, 100 mins)

Plunkett and MacLean (Robert Carlyle and Jonny Lee Miller) are rakish Dick Turpins cutting a dash through 18th-century society. Instead of a decent plot, director Jake Scott offers noise, colour and virtuous pop-promo visuals. *West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Rd. Repertory: The Pullman Everyman*

THE RED VIOLIN (15, 132 mins)

François Girard's daisy chain of historical vignettes follows the course of a cursed violin down the centuries. Unfortunately, a thrifit shop budget leaves many of the period backdrops looking like cast-offs from a BBC school programme. More crucially, Girard's bittersweet narrative leaves the film labouring in third gear throughout. *West End: Curzon Mayfair, Ritzy Cinema*

THE RUGRATS MOVIE (U, 80 mins)

Kids, no doubt, will eat this feature-length cartoon up. Adults should simply grin and bear it. *West End: Curzon Soho, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15, 123 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

THE TRICLERY CINEMA (15, 100 mins)

Terrence Malick's long-awaited return to the director's chair is a fabulous, fever-struck war film. *West End: Curzon Soho, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

THE THIN RED LINE (15, 170 mins)

Terrence Malick's long-awaited return to the director's chair is a fabulous, fever-struck war film. *West End: Curzon Soho, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

WAKING NED (PG, 91 mins)

This rattle-bag of a black comedy is just too air-brushed for its own good. *West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

WICKED (15, 98 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema*

WIT (15, 99 mins)

Even if plompy's clanking rhymes make you want to "slam" the perpetrator's head in a car door, Marc Levin's drama still carries an emotional force. *West End: Metro, Ritzy Cinema. And local cinemas*

TEA WITH MUSSOLINI (PG, 117 mins)

Franco Zeffirelli's *Tea with Mussolini* is a typically loquacious tale of three ditzy Brits (Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright) adrift in Mussolini-era Tuscany. *West End: Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION (15, 100 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

WOMEN IN LOVE (15, 114 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

WOMEN IN THE RAIN (15, 100 mins)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas*

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16/LISTINGS

UXBRIDGE
ODEON (0870-000007) • Uxbridge
The Faculty 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm
Mighty Joe 1.35pm Return to Paradise
1pm, 3.30pm, 5.55pm, 8.20pm

WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0870-901-0401) • Walthamstow
Central American History X 2pm,
5.10pm The Faculty 2.20pm, 5.20pm,
8.30pm Little Voice 8.30pm Walking
Ned 2.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm

WALTON
THE SCREEN (0122-262825) BR: Walton
on Thames A Civil Action 8.30pm
An Ideal Husband 5.45pm, 8.55pm
Shakespeare in Love 3.30pm Tea with
Mussolini 6pm

WELL HALL
CORONET (0181-360 3315) BR: Ethan
American History X 3.30pm, 6pm,
8.25pm Central Station 8.30pm
The Rugrats Movie 4pm, 6pm

WILLESDEN
BELLEVUE (0181-300 0222) • Willesden
Green A Civil Action 8pm The Rugrats
Movie 5pm, 7pm

WIMBLEDON
ODEON (0870-000007) BR: Wimble-
don A Civil Action 1.40pm, 4pm,
6.25pm, 8.45pm An Ideal Husband
1.40pm, 4pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm Leek,
Stock & Two Smoking Barrels
10.30pm The Mask of Zorro 10.30pm
Out of Sight 10.30pm Payback 4.30pm,
6.30pm, 8.30pm Private Practice
2.30pm, 6.45pm The Rugrats Movie
12.25pm, 2.10pm, 3.35pm Shakespeare
in Love 5.45pm, 8.25pm Walking Ned
2.30pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm

WOODFORD
ABC (0181-365 3463) • South Woodford
A Civil Action 4.50pm, 5.35pm, 6.10pm,
8.30pm Elizabeth 2.10pm, 5.40pm
Private Practice 8.30pm Walking
Ned 2pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm

WOLWICH
CORONET (0181-354 5049) BR: Wokken
Arendt & Civil Action 4pm, 6.20pm,
8.30pm The Faculty 6.15pm, 8.45pm
Mighty Joe 3.30pm

REPERTORY

LONDON
ICA The Mall, SW1 (0171-390 3647)
Actresses (NC) 5pm, 7pm, 9pm Asiles
and Diamonds (NC) 5pm, 7pm, 9pm

LICPO: MUSEUM CINEMA National Film
Theatre, SE1 (0171-228 3222) What the
Butter Said (NC) 7pm

LLCP: MFT South Bank, SE1 (0171-928
3222) Golden Threads (NC) 2pm Amor
de Hombre (NC) 4pm A World Apart
Shattered (NC) 6.30pm, 8.30pm
Four (NC) 6.30pm It's a Spy
(NC) 8.30pm Pitching for Prime Time
Lesbian and Gay TV Special Event
(NC) 4.45pm

PHOENIX CINEMA High Road, N1 (0181-
441 6789) Gods and Monsters (15)
4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

PRINCE CHARLES Leicester Square, WC2
(0171-47 8161) Good Hunting (15)
1.15pm The Disappearance of Flubar
(15) 3.30pm There's Something About
Mary (15) 5.30pm Your Friends and
Neighbors (16) 3.10pm

THE PULLMAN EVERYMAN Hay's Gash
Hall, EC2 (0841-2242) Bedeviled and
Halfway (15) 4pm, 6.40pm, 8.45pm

RIVERSIDE STUDIOS CINEMA Crisp
Road, WB (0171-420 0100) Taxi Driver
(18) 6.30pm + Affection (18) 6.45pm

WATERMANS ARTS CENTRE High
Street, Brentford, Middlesex (0181-568
1778) Gods and Monsters (15) 8pm,
8.45pm April (12) 1pm

BRIGHTON
DUCHESS OF YORK'S CINEMA (01273-
60250) Gallivant (15) 2pm Gods and
Monsters (15) 4.15pm, 4.45pm Comed
d'Automne (U) 6.30pm

BRISTOL
WATERSIDE (0171-925 3845) Starm
(15) 6pm, 8.20pm Festers (15) 6.10pm
Four Little Girls (15) 8.30pm

CAMBRIDGE
AFTER CINEMA (01223-204114) An
Ideal Husband (PG) 2.10pm, 7.10pm
Conte d'Armonie (U) 2.45pm, 5.15pm
Gods and Monsters (15) 1pm

CARDIFF
CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE (01223-
399666) La Classe de Neige (15)
7.30pm Central Station (15) 8pm

CHICHESTER
NEW PARK FILM CENTRE (01243-
786650) Little Voices (15) 4.45pm
Pleasantville (12) 4pm Very Bad
Things (16) 8pm

IPSWICH
FILM THEATRE (01473-215544) Festen
(15) 2.30pm, 6pm, 8.15pm Beloved (15)
7.30pm

NORWICH
CINEMA CITY (01603-822047) Pleasant-
ville (12) 2.30pm, 8.15pm Siccor (18)
10.45pm

PLYMOUTH
PLYMOUTH ARTS CENTRE (01752-
206114) Dobermann (18) 8pm

COUNTRYWIDE
ABERYSTWYTH
COMMODORE (01970-612421) The Thin
Red Line (15)

BASINGSTOKE
WARNER VILLAGE (01261-81789) The
Rugrats Movie (U) Shakespeare in
Love (15) Madeline (U) Payback (18)
Private Practice (15) 2pm Walking
Ned (PG) An Ideal Husband (PG)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Saving
Private Ryan (15) A Civil Action (15)
A Bug's Life (U) Arlington Road (15)
Black and the Past (12) The Faculty
(15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking Ned
(PG) Return to Paradise (15)

BATH
THEATRE (01241-500310) Plunkett and
Macleane (15) The Faculty (15) La
Vita e Bella (PG) Mighty Joe (PG)
A Bug's Life (U) Blast from the Past
(12) Ace Ventura, Pet Detective (12)

BOURNEMOUTH
ODEON (0870-000007) Babes in Pig
in the City (10) A Civil Action (15)
Private Practice (15) Walking Ned (PG)
An Ideal Husband (PG) Plunkett and
Macleane (15) Saving Private
Ryan (15) A Civil Action (15)
A Bug's Life (U) Arlington Road (15)
Black and the Past (12) The Faculty
(15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking Ned
(PG) Return to Paradise (15)

BRIGHTON
ODEON (0870-000007) Payback (18)
Private Practice (15) The Rugrats Movie (U)
Walking Ned (PG) An Ideal Husband
(PG) Mighty Joe (PG) Plunkett and
Macleane (15) The Faculty (15) La
Vita e Bella (PG) Mighty Joe (PG)

VIRGIN (0151-555145) Shakespeare in
Love (15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking Ned
(PG) Home Alone (15) Saving
Private Ryan (15) A Civil Action (15)
A Bug's Life (U) Arlington Road (15)
Black and the Past (12) The Faculty
(15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking Ned
(PG) Return to Paradise (15)

TAUNTON
ODEON (0870-000007) A Bug's Life (U)
The Rugrats Movie (U) An Ideal
Husband (PG) The Faculty (15) Mighty
Joe (PG) The Parent Trap (PG)
Walking Ned (PG) The Faculty (15)
Private Practice (15) Walking Ned
(PG) Return to Paradise (15) Mighty
Joe (PG) The Faculty (15)

WATFORD
WARNER VILLAGE (01923-682222)
A Civil Action (15) The Rugrats Movie (U)
Walking Ned (PG) An Ideal Husband
(PG) Mighty Joe (PG) Plunkett and
Macleane (15) The Faculty (15) La
Vita e Bella (PG) Mighty Joe (PG)

WINDSOR
Windsor Arts Centre (01753-559336)
Beta Epoque (15) II Postino (15)

CARDIFF
UGC (0120-360-4567) Saving Private
Ryan Return to Paradise (15) A
Bug's Life (15) Madeline (U) Urban
Legend (16) Mighty Joe (PG) The Texas
Chainaw Massacre (16) Plunkett and
Macleane (15) The Opposite of Sex
(16) The Rugrats Movie (U) Walking Ned
(PG) The Faculty (15) Mighty Joe (PG)
Walking Ned (PG) The Rugrats Movie
(U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Payback (18)
The Faculty (15) An Ideal Husband (PG)

CHELMSFORD
ODEON (01245-349500) Return to
Paradise (15) Shakespeare in Love (15)
Madeline (U) Tea with Mussolini (PG)
Walking Ned (PG) The Rugrats Movie
(U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Payback (18)
The Faculty (15) An Ideal Husband (PG)

COLCHESTER
ODEON (0870-000007) An Ideal
Husband (PG) Street Soldiers (PG) A
Civil Action (15) The Parent Trap (PG)
Walking Ned (PG) The Faculty (15)
Private Practice (15) Walking Ned (PG)
The Faculty (15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking
Ned (PG) The Faculty (15) The Rugrats
Movie (U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Shakespeare
in Love (15) Mighty Joe (PG)

COVENTRY
ODEON (0870-000007) The Rugrats
Movie (U) The Parent Trap (PG)
Walking Ned (PG) The Faculty (15)
Private Practice (15) Walking Ned (PG)
The Faculty (15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking
Ned (PG) The Faculty (15) The Rugrats
Movie (U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Shakespeare
in Love (15) Mighty Joe (PG)

ESSEX
ODEON (0870-000007) Return to
Paradise (15) Shakespeare in Love (15)
Madeline (U) Tea with Mussolini (PG)
Walking Ned (PG) The Rugrats Movie
(U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Payback (18)
The Faculty (15) An Ideal Husband (PG)

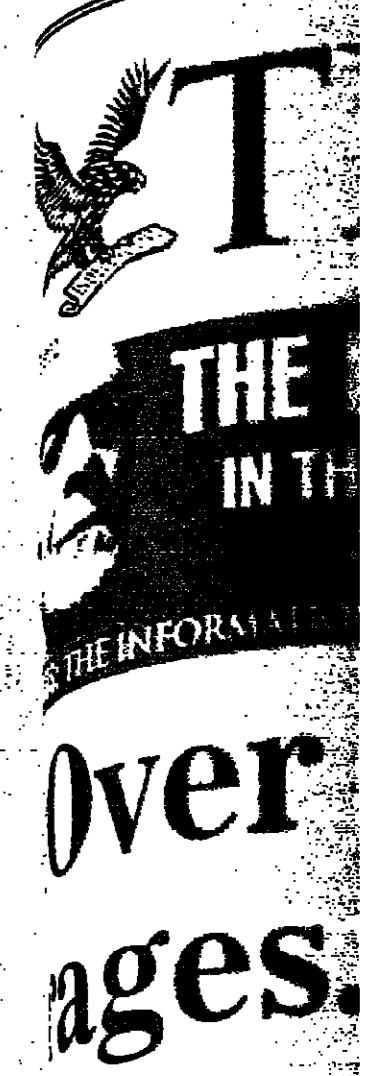
WORLDS END
CORONET (0181-360 3315) The Faculty
(15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking Ned
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(PG) The Faculty (15) The Rugrats
Movie (U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Payback (18)
The Faculty (15) An Ideal Husband (PG)

WYKES
CORONET (0181-300 0222) The Faculty
(15) Mighty Joe (PG) Walking Ned
(PG) The Faculty (15) Walking Ned
(PG) The Faculty (15) The Rugrats
Movie (U) Mighty Joe (PG) A Bug's Life (U)
Plunkett and Macleane (15) Payback (18)
The Faculty (15) An Ideal Husband (PG)

THEATRE

WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today, times
and prices for the week; running times
and prices for the month; and details of
seats at a price. D = Returns only
Matines = 11 Sun, 3 Tue, 4 Wed, 5 Sat, 7
Sun, 8 Tue, 9 Sat, 10 Sun, 11 Mon, 12
Tue, 13 Wed, 14 Thu, 15 Fri, 16 Sat, 17
Sun, 18 Mon, 19 Tue, 20 Wed, 21 Thu, 22
Fri, 23 Sat, 24 Sun, 25 Mon, 26 Tue, 27
Wed, 28 Thu, 29 Fri, 30 Sat, 31 Sun, 1
Mon, 2 Tue, 3 Wed, 4 Thu, 5 Fri, 6 Sat, 7
Sun, 8 Mon, 9 Tue, 10 Wed, 11 Thu, 12
Fri, 13 Sat, 14 Sun, 15 Mon, 16 Tue, 17
Wed, 18 Thu, 19 Fri, 20 Sat, 21 Sun, 22
Mon, 23 Tue, 24 Wed, 25 Thu, 26 Fri, 27
Sat, 28 Sun, 29 Mon, 30 Tue, 31 Wed, 1
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TUESDAY TELEVISION

Channel 4

THE TUESDAY REVIEW

The Independent 20 April 1999



BBC1

ROBERT HANKS

TELEVISION REVIEW

YOU USED to know where you were with thrillers: you had heroes and villains, you had a hero, a bit of comedy and a bit of chargin around. These days, though, it's all psychological.

There are days when it seems you can't turn a corner without running into a "psychological thriller" - *ITV's* *Shameless*, *Crusher* or *Midlife*. *Walters*, it's a re-boot of *Crusher*. *Shane* is abysmal. *News of the World* went hunting and last night we got *Pete*. *Romanian* exphans in *Stardust* and *Prune*. *Rating*, things have gone worse. On Sunday evening we got *Alex Jennings* adopting a dark obsession with the genre - more a symptom of reasonably lame drama with upmarket aspirations.

Even on that sketch definition, *Butterfly Collectors* barely qualifies since, whatever else you say about it, it isn't notably inventive. Investigating the murder of a small-time drugs dealer, *DI McKeown* (Postlethwaite) is a product of foxy British design, devoting what amounts to a crusade on suspect. *Dex* (Janine McKeown) longs for *Withnail & I*, half an hour's pay-off for Dex's lawyer, employing him to lie old and sister. *Dex* sees through the natural self-sassurance and domestic contentment that *McKeown* longs for: within about five minutes of the air supply - the most effective way of putting on a conflagration - allowed his reactor to heat up to such a degree that it was in danger of exploding. This was a scandalous fate of incompetence and government cover-up. The level of retrodictive contamination of the surrounding countryside was not revealed for decades. Even dumped down by skilled acting and fund special effects, *Dex* is ugly. *Heads*: what really happened to the parents? Is *Dex* just a keen gardener, or is there some other explanation? For all

that freshily-dug earth in his back yard?

If I had to pick the real culprit, it'd have to be *Dex*'s delinquent, McClellan, a bit of a gimp and a lot of chargin around. These

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